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Man of the Hour

BROADHURST

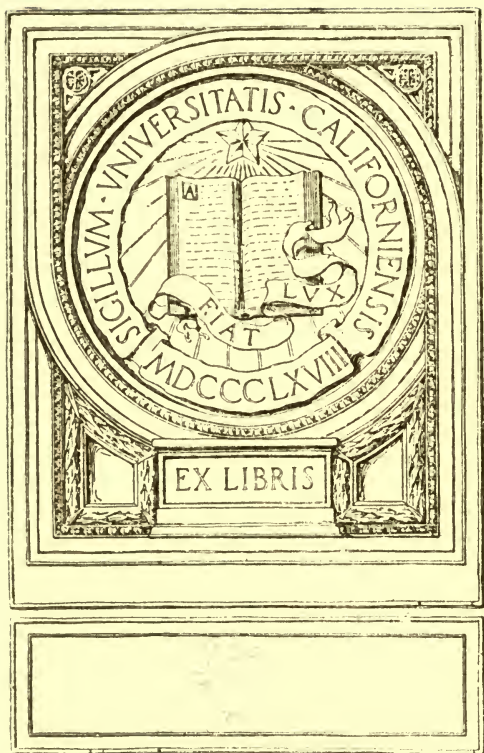
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SAMUEL FRENCH, 28-30 West 38th St., New York



THE MAN OF THE HOUR

A Play in Four Acts

By

GEORGE BROADHURST

Revised, 1916, by George H. Broadhurst

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Act of March 4, 1909.

THE MAN OF THE HOUR.

ORIGINAL CAST.

ALWYN BENNETT.....	<i>Frederick Perry</i>
CHAS. WAINWRIGHT.....	<i>James E. Wilson</i>
SCOTT H. GIBBS.....	<i>Chas. Mackay</i>
RICHARD HARRIGAN.....	<i>J. O. LaBrasse</i>
JAMES PHELAN.....	<i>George Fawcett</i>
PERRY CARTER WAINWRIGHT...	<i>Douglas Fairbanks</i>
JUDGE NEWMAN.....	<i>Chas. Stedman</i>
HENRY THOMPSON.....	<i>Geoffrey C. Stein</i>
WM. INGRAM.....	<i>Wm. Richards</i>
RICHARD P. RORERTS.....	<i>Bennett Southard</i>
HENRY WILLIAMS.....	<i>Mark J. Cody</i>
ARTHUR PAYNE.....	<i>Basil West</i>
OFFICE BOY.....	<i>Robt. A. Lothian</i>
DALLAS WAINWRIGHT.....	<i>Lillian Kemble</i>
CYNTHIA GARRISON.....	<i>Diva Marolda</i>
MRS. BENNETT.....	<i>Harriet Otis Dallenbaugh</i>

ACT I. A room in the house of CHAS. WAINWRIGHT.

ACT II. The Mayor's office.

ACT III. Reception room in the Charlton Hotel.

ACT IV. Two Committee Rooms in the City Hall.

THE MAN OF THE HOUR.

CHARACTERS.

ALWYN BENNETT
CHARLES WAINWRIGHT
SCOTT G. GIBBS
RICHARD HORIGAN
JAMES PHELAN
PERRY CARTER WAINWRIGHT
JUDGE BEWMAN
HENRY THOMPSON
RICHARD P. ROBERTS
HENRY WILLIAMS
MILLS, the BUTLER
ARTHUR PAYNE
DALLAS WAINWRIGHT
CYNTHIA GARRISON
MRS. BENNETT
INGRAM

NOTE:—There are seventeen speaking parts in the play but it is so arranged that it could be played by fifteen people. As MILLS appears only in ACT I, he could double ROBERTS, WILLIAMS or PAYNE, and as INGRAM appears only in ACT II, he also could double one of those three characters.

A description of each character is given as the entrance is made.

THE TIME is the Present.

THE PLACE is any large city in America.

THE MAN OF THE HOUR

ACT I.

SCENE:—Room in CHARLES WAINWRIGHT'S Summer home. The walls and ceiling are painted so as to represent the natural wood. There is a very large open fireplace R. built of cobblestones: this must be a distinct architectural feature of the room, which must convey the impression of the principal lounging and living-room in a wealthy man's spacious home in the mountains or near the seashore. The furnishings and furniture must tend to the same end. There is an exit R. below the fireplace and leading to a room which is used as WAINWRIGHT'S office when he is occupying the house: another entrance down L. as if from a hall; another a stairway up-stage L. as though coming from the rooms in the upper stories and one C. through large windows leading either on to the verandah, or to the lawn. There is a table C. with chairs R. and L. of it, a lounge L. and other furniture as required to dress the stage and as necessitated by the business of the play. On the table are some books and two messages received by WAINWRIGHT over his private wire in the room off R.

THE TIME is a summer day of last year.

DISCOVERED:—When the Curtain rises CHARLES WAINWRIGHT is shown. He is a very rich

of myself—getting up at such an hour. It was the country air, I suppose. How's the market?

WAINWRIGHT. (*Handing dispatches to GIBBS*) Opens strong.

GIBBS. (*Looking at dispatches, puts message on table*) Do you know this is the first business day I haven't been at my office in six years. (*Sits at left of table c.*)

WAINWRIGHT. That is one of the things I like about you, Gibbs. I've watched you ever since you put through that deal in Missouri Midland five years ago. Your methods were a little too spectacular to suit me perhaps, but you won—and that's what counts.

GIBBS. I had to stand some severe criticism for that deal.

WAINWRIGHT. A successful man is always criticized.

GIBBS. Anything new in the papers?

WAINWRIGHT. You haven't read them?

GIBBS. No—I was in too big a hurry to get within touch of that wire of yours.

WAINWRIGHT. Then you haven't seen this—(*WAINWRIGHT picks up paper and reads*) "We are able to state, on the highest authority, that the engagement of the niece of a great financier and street railway magnate to a prominent and daring young Wall Street operator will be announced in the near future. As the young lady and her brother are the only relatives of the magnate and as he will undoubtedly leave them the bulk of his great fortune and as the prospective groom is the head of a prominent Stock Exchange firm, the marriage, in addition to being a love match should be a most fortunate and advantageous one in every way." (*Puts paper on table*) No mistaking who is meant, is there!

GIBBS. No, sir. I wonder what your niece will think about it?

WAINWRIGHT. It's just what was needed to bring things to an issue. In fact it's such a clever stroke that I believe you made it, didn't you?

GIBBS. Well—I—I didn't exactly cause the paragraph to be written but-er-er—! (*Rises*)

WAINWRIGHT. I congratulate you. As a forcing move, it couldn't be beaten. Dallas has dallied with you long enough.

GIBBS. It isn't the waiting for a delicate answer that I mind.

WAINWRIGHT. (*c. Rises*) I mind it. She knows I'm in favor of the match and I want the matter settled. That was one of the reasons I asked you up here—to give you a chance to speak to her again.

GIBBS. If I were only sure she loved me.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Playing for a laugh*) If she doesn't you can make her *think she* does and that's sufficient. *Any man can make any unattached woman think she loves him if he keeps at it long enough! I'm a bachelor and I know!*"

GIBBS. Any "Unattached" woman perhaps. But is Miss Wainwright unattached?

WAINWRIGHT. Of course she is.

GIBBS. At times I have *thought that Alwyn Bennett was*——

WAINWRIGHT. They're friends, nothing more.

GIBBS. I'm not so sure——

WAINWRIGHT. (*Starts ticker*) I am. In any case Dallas wouldn't marry Bennett.

GIBBS. Why? (*Goes toward table*)

WAINWRIGHT. She has an ideal—(*Crosses to GIBBS*) the man who does things, (*Puts message on table and goes to GIBBS*) that is greatly in your favor. You have, alone and unaided made *your* way in the world. He's only a polo player——

GIBBS. (*R. L. C.*) Yes, but——

WAINWRIGHT. Besides, Bennett has known

Dallas for years. Had he wanted to marry her he would have shown it long ago.

GIBBS. He was always slow getting started—but start him once and he'll make up for all the time he's lost and he'll fight till he drops. Don't make any mistake about that. I know. (*Stops ticker*)

WAINWRIGHT. All the more reason then why you should settle the matter. Do it to-day. I'll see that you have the chance.

GIBBS. I'll try.

(THOMPSON *re-enters with another message. He also has a blank for the reply. He hands both to WAINWRIGHT.*)

THOMPSON. There's an answer, sir.

(WAINWRIGHT *reads message and goes to table—writes answer.*)

GIBBS. Thompson! (*Crosses to R.*)

THOMPSON. Mr. Gibbs!

GIBBS. How is D. L. & K. this morning?

THOMPSON. 62¼, sir.

GIBBS. And Missouri Midland!

THOMPSON. 94¼, sir.

(WAINWRIGHT *hands reply to THOMPSON.*)

WAINWRIGHT. Rush it!

THOMPSON. (*Goes L. and reads despatch*) Yes, sir. (THOMPSON *exits as before R.*)

GIBBS. (*After door is closed. R. c.*) I didn't know Thompson was telegrapher as well as private secretary.

WAINWRIGHT. A year ago he heard me speak of my difficulty in getting an intelligent man, who would keep his mouth shut, to handle my wire while I was here. He said nothing but before I came this

time he told me he could do it. He'd been studying nights.

GIBBS. (*Goes in front of table*) He's a jewel.

WAINWRIGHT. There's one particularly good thing about Thompson, I can trust him implicitly.

GIBBS. Implicitly?

WAINWRIGHT. Yes. He's been with me nine years and I've tried him in a thousand ways.

GIBBS. I wish I could find such a man. (*Sits at L. of table*)

WAINWRIGHT. You'll try many before you do. (*Referring to message in his hand*) This will interest you.

GIBBS. Yes.

WAINWRIGHT. It's from my office. It says Borough Street Railway stock is now offered at 63. I told them to tell your office to take all they could at that figure—that they were to make no bids—just pick up quietly all that was offered.

GIBBS. You have given me twenty-five per cent of the deal and I am to handle it on the floor.

WAINWRIGHT. But you are to purchase no stock without my orders and you're not to buy a single share for your private account.

GIBBS. That's understood.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Going to R.*) Only one thing can stop us. The defeat of the present administration in the election next Fall.

GIBBS. I'm sorry to say it, but it looks to me as though the administration would be defeated. (*Sits L. of table with elbows on table facing WAINWRIGHT*)

WAINWRIGHT. (*To C. in front of table*) There are four months from now till the election and, properly campaigned, I think the administration can win. They have the organization—good workers—the office holders and the police. (*R. of table*) Only one thing more is necessary—money.

GIBBS. Money?

WAINWRIGHT. And that will be forthcoming, providing Horigan agrees to my terms. He'll be here at noon. I've asked Phelan, too.

GIBBS. Phelan?

WAINWRIGHT. Yes, Alderman Phelan of the Eighth Ward.

GIBBS. I thought he and Horigan were enemies.

WAINWRIGHT. They are. I want to reconcile them.

GIBBS. But why all this trouble for Phelan? (*Rises and moves to WAINWRIGHT*) Horigan's the boss. He controls the Council. Phelan has no vote but his own.

WAINWRIGHT. Horigan is a bull-dog. He rules my main strength and has no more diplomacy than a mule.

GIBBS. And Phelan?

WAINWRIGHT. Phelan is a bull-dog crossed with a fox. He showed that when he was Chief of Police. He'll either be with me or against me. I prefer to have him with me.

(BUTLER *enters* L.)

BUTLER. Judge Newman, sir.

WAINWRIGHT. Certainly. (BUTLER *exits* L. To GIBBS) I know what he wants.

(JUDGE NEWMAN *enters* L. WAINWRIGHT *goes to meet him*. GIBBS *drops down* R. *He is a man of sixty, supine and ingratiating. Nature intended him to be an honest man but forgot to give him the necessary backbone. His wife is domineering and masterful and in years.*)

JUDGE. How do you do, Charles.

WAINWRIGHT. Glad to see you, Judge. Do you know Mr. Gibbs?

JUDGE. Indeed I'm glad to meet you, Mr. Gibbs.
(*Crosses to GIBBS and takes his hand*)

GIBBS. And I to meet you, sir.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Making sign for all to be seated*) In addition to being an old friend, the Judge is my nearest neighbor; as you come from the station, the Bennetts are the nearest going the other way.

JUDGE. And being a neighbor I thought I would drop in and—and——

WAINWRIGHT. And make a friendly call I understand——

JUDGE. It was Mrs. Newman who suggested it.
(*To GIBBS*) You don't know Mrs. Newman, do you?

GIBBS. I haven't the pleasure. (R.)

JUDGE. A wonderful woman—simply wonderful.

WAINWRIGHT. We were speaking of the approaching campaign as you came in, Judge. You come up for re-election, don't you?

JUDGE. I do if I get a renomination.

GIBBS. Of course there's no question about that.

JUDGE. But there is. (*Turns to WAINWRIGHT*) The last time I saw Mr. Horigan he intimated that he was against it.

WAINWRIGHT. Horigan against it; that's bad.

JUDGE. Very bad—unless you use your influence with him.

WAINWRIGHT. I'd like to oblige you, Judge, but you know how I hate to mix in political matters.

JUDGE. But for old time's sake—and in view of our long friendship——

WAINWRIGHT. When you put it that way, much as I dislike it, I can't refuse.

JUDGE. Thank you. Please take the matter up with Mr. Horigan as soon as you conveniently can.

WAINWRIGHT. I'll do it to-day.

JUDGE. To-day?

WAINWRIGHT. Mr. Horigan is coming to pay me

"a little friendly call," too. He'll be here about noon.

JUDGE. How fortunate. I'll drop in shortly after and see what the verdict is, with your permission of course.

WAINWRIGHT. Certainly.

JUDGE. Then I won't detain you any longer. (*Rises and crosses to door L.*) Good-morning, Mr. Gibbs. (*To WAINWRIGHT*) I'll see you a little later, Charles. (*Exits L.*)

GIBBS. It was good of you to agree to help him. (R.)

WAINWRIGHT. (*Moves to back of table c.*) I did it because it gives me "a friend on the bench." The longer you live the more useful you will find that to be.

(*DALLAS enters from stairs L. She is a prepossessing, high-minded girl of twenty-five, dressed becomingly in modish summer clothes. It is evident from her manner that she is perturbed about something which has recently come to her notice. She comes down R. of lounge*)

DALLAS. Good-morning, Uncle. (*Sits on Lounge L.*)

WAINWRIGHT. (C.) Dallas!

DALLAS. Mr. Gibbs.

GIBBS. How do you do?

WAINWRIGHT. A good idea of mine having Mr. Gibbs up here, wasn't it?

DALLAS. Yes.

WAINWRIGHT. But he's here for to-day only, don't forget that.

DALLAS. I'll remember.

WAINWRIGHT. What's the programme?

DALLAS. I haven't decided yet, Uncle.

WAINWRIGHT. (R.) In any case, treat him well for my sake. (*WAINWRIGHT indicates to GIBBS that*

this is his chance. WAINWRIGHT *exits R.* *There is a slight pause)*

GIBBS. (*Crosses to table and takes up newspaper*)
You have seen this paper?

DALLAS. Yes.

GIBBS. And are annoyed.

DALLAS. Greatly.

GIBBS. No more than I am. I wish I knew who did it. (*Works R. a little—leaves paper on table*)

DALLAS. You don't, do you? (*Going to GIBBS R. C.*)

GIBBS. Certainly not. Did you think I knew——

DALLAS. No!

GIBBS. I'm glad of that. But—it's done——

DALLAS. I shall deny it.

GIBBS. Why? You haven't refused me.

DALLAS. But I have told you that I—don't—love you.

GIBBS. But you have said you admire and respect me. (*Back of chair R.*)

DALLAS. Yes.

GIBBS. For a beginning I am satisfied with that. Admiration and respect form the one foundation on which a lasting love is built.

DALLAS. Are you sure?

GIBBS. Quite. You wouldn't marry a man you didn't admire and respect—would you?

DALLAS. I wouldn't—marry him. Perhaps I couldn't help—loving him.

GIBBS. Marry me. I'll win your love. You've temporized for three months. Don't put me off any longer. You know I love you.

DALLAS. Yes. I think you do.

GIBBS. You know it, and you know how it would please your uncle. Say yes. (*Drops down R.*)

DALLAS. You must wait.

GIBBS. How long?

DALLAS. I don't know.

GIBBS. Is that fair?

DALLAS. I do it because I want to be fair.

GIBBS. To whom?

DALLAS. To you—and to myself.

GIBBS. At least tell me this. Is there——

(PERRY enters from stairs L. He is a light-hearted, buoyant chap of twenty-one. He is still a boy in every sense of the word. He is outspoken in manner and frank in his likes and dislikes. His love for his sister is sincere and unalloyed. GIBBS sees PERRY and stops. DALLAS turns to back of chair R.)

GIBBS. Good-morning!

PERRY. (*Very coolly*) Good-morning. (*Picks up newspaper from table and sits on lounge to read L.*)

GIBBS. Fine weather.

PERRY. Yes. (*Ostentatiously reads the paper. GIBBS notices his behavior and his eyes narrow and his jaw sets viciously*)

DALLAS. Mr. Gibbs is here only for to-day.

PERRY. Hope he'll have a pleasant time.

GIBBS. (*To DALLAS*) I think you said you had no plans for to-day.

DALLAS. Not yet.

GIBBS. When they are made, please let me know if I am included. I am entirely at your disposal. (*Exits R.*)

DALLAS. (*Moves to front of table*) Perry, how could you be so rude?

PERRY. Because I don't like him. (*Goes to table*) Did you ask him?

DALLAS. He denied it without my asking.

PERRY. Guilty conscience.

DALLAS. Perry!

PERRY. I'll bet it is. That's just the kind of thing he'd do.

DALLAS. I won't hear you speak that way about him.

PERRY. (*Referring to newspaper from table c.*) "Oh, the highest authority!" "A love match." Wouldn't that drive you to the benches in the Park—(*Puts paper on table*) How are you going to deny it—by wire?

DALLAS. No.

PERRY. Good. The long distance 'phone is quicker. I'll call the editor up. And when you get through give me a chance. You can bet what I say will make Central keep off the wire! (*Starts as if to go to hall L.*)

DALLAS. Perry!

PERRY. (*Stopping at door L.*) Yes.

DALLAS. I'm not sure that I'm going to deny it.

PERRY. But if you don't people will imagine—! You don't mean to say there is anything in it—(*Going over to her R.*) Little sister, you're not thinking of marrying him!

DALLAS. What is there against Mr. Gibbs? He is a college man—an athlete—a successful man—a man with a future—and a gentleman. What more could a girl ask?

PERRY. I don't know what it is. I feel it, that's all. (*Sincerely*) You're the only thing I have in the world, Dallas, and I'd just hate to see you married to him—(*DALLAS places her hand affectionately on PERRY'S shoulder and then walks away and sits R.*) He's going to be just like Uncle—a money-grub. If you marry Gibbs in two years you'll be in third place to a private wire and a long distance 'phone. (*Going to DALLAS. Sincerely*) Don't do it.

DALLAS. I've not promised—yet.

PERRY. Gee. I'm glad. If you must marry—and I suppose a girl must—why not pick out a chap

we know and like—a chap like—like Alwyn Bennett. There's a good idea, why not marry him?

DALLAS. Don't talk nonsense.

PERRY. It isn't nonsense. Why not marry Alwyn?

DALLAS. Oh—for a thousand reasons. (*Rises*)

PERRY. Give me one—just one. I dare you!

DALLAS. Well, for one reason—he hasn't asked me. And—if that is not enough—he isn't—in love with me.

PERRY. But he is. Isn't he around with you all the time? Don't you ride together, shoot together, fish together! I'll bet he's in love with you.

(BUTLER *appears* L.)

BUTLER. Mr. Bennett.

(BENNETT *enters* L. *He is a good-looking, prepossessing young man of about thirty and is dressed in riding clothes. There is nothing in any sense weak about him, in fact he comes of fighting stock and takes after his forefathers, but his father having left him a fortune, thoughts of work for work's sake or for the mere doing of things, has never seriously entered his head. He comes on quickly and expectantly. He hopes to see DALLAS alone. Seeing her first his face lights up, but when his eye falls on PERRY his face drops somewhat. The BUTLER exits.*)

PERRY. Hello, Alwyn. Glad to see you. (*Shake hands* C.)

BENNETT. Same here. (*To DALLAS*) Good-morning!

DALLAS. Good-morning! (*Back of chair* R. *of table*)

BENNETT. Well, I'm ready to finish that set.

PERRY. Why didn't you come yesterday?

BENNETT. Mother has a guest—Miss Garrison.

PERRY. Cynthia Garrison.

BENNETT. Yes.

PERRY. I want to see Miss Garrison. (*Moves to front of table*) Do you know her, Dallas?

DALLAS. (*Back of chair R. of table*) Very well, indeed. She's a splendid girl.

PERRY. She's a jolly good judge of Boston Terriers. I bought two of hers when her kennel was under the hammer—Betty and Prince Charlie. They're beauties, too. I tried to meet her at the sale but they told me she wasn't there.

BENNETT. (L. c.) She couldn't bear to see the dogs sold, but they had to go.

PERRY. Why?

BENNETT. She has no money and doesn't want to be dependent on her friends. Under similar circumstances, other girls have turned to raising chickens. Cynthia's tastes did not run that way; she chose Boston terriers, but she hadn't sufficient capital and the experiment failed.

(DALLAS moves to front of table.)

PERRY. She must be all right. I'll drop over to your place this afternoon.

BENNETT. Do. But you'll have an opportunity to meet Miss Garrison before then. She and mother are coming in the car. (*Crosses to C., to DALLAS*) I rode on ahead thinking I might have a chance for a few words with—(*Turns to PERRY*) Why not go down to meet them?

PERRY. I'd look fine, wouldn't I? Standing in the middle of the road waving my handkerchief and shouting: "Stop the car! Stop the car! I want to meet Miss Garrison."

BENNETT. They can't be far away.

PERRY. All the less reason for me to go after them. (*Turns L. to sofa and picks up cap*)

BENNETT. (*To DALLAS*) Come and see us play.
(C.)

DALLAS. (*Shaking head*) I'm very sorry. (R.)

BENNETT. Do come.

DALLAS. We have a guest, too——

BENNETT. Oh!

PERRY. (*Crosses to back of table*) I say, Alwyn, does Miss Garrison know I have the dogs with me?

BENNETT. I think not, Perry. (R. C.)

PERRY. Isn't that bully! I'll bet she'll jump for joy! And may be it won't put me solid with her right from the start. Oh, I guess, yes.

(BUTLER *appears* L. MRS. BENNETT and MISS GARRISON *enter* L. DALLAS *goes to meet them, as she does so* PERRY *comes quickly to* BENNETT. MRS. BENNETT *is a woman of distinction and refinement and is about fifty years of age. She is not of the type which thinks itself young at fifty and which dresses in gay colors and uses every artifice to conceal its years. While not old-fashioned nor of somber mind her romance died with the death of her husband and she lives, and takes her joy, in her son.* CYNTHIA GARRISON *is a breezy, good-natured outdoor girl of nineteen or twenty—* DALLAS *crosses to* MRS. BENNETT.)

MRS. BENNETT. Dallas, dear!

(DALLAS *kisses* MRS. BENNETT.)

PERRY. (*Apart to BENNETT*) She's aces. (*Up-stage* R.)

DALLAS. (*Going to CYNTHIA*) Cynthia.

CYNTHIA. You darling. (CYNTHIA *kisses* DALLAS)

PERRY. (*To BENNETT*) Don't I wish she'd do that to me. (BENNETT *smiles, pats* PERRY *on the*

shoulder and goes up-stage. During the following scene PERRY hovers about and tries to attract DALLAS'S attention)

DALLAS. How long do you stay?

CYNTHIA. As long as Mrs. Bennett lets me. (L.)

MRS. BENNETT. Which means all summer.

DALLAS. Isn't that splendid? We can see a lot of each other, can't we?

CYNTHIA. Yes, indeed. I have to make the most of it this time. As soon as summer is over this butterfly becomes an ant. (*Moves to back of sofa L.*)

MRS. BENNETT. Don't be foolish, Cynthia. (*Moves to sofa L.*)

DALLAS. An ant? (*Moves to upper end of sofa*)

CYNTHIA. Yes, I can't live on my—(*CYNTHIA catches sight of PERRY who is trying to attract DALLAS' attention. When he sees this he stops and endeavors to appear unconcerned. DALLAS crosses to chair L. of table*) Excuse me, but I think someone is trying to flag us. (*Moves to lower end of sofa*)

MRS. BENNETT. Why, it's Perry.

DALLAS. Of course it is.

PERRY. Yes. It's Perry! You almost overlooked Perry, didn't you?

DALLAS. (*To MISS CYNTHIA*) Let me present my brother. Perry, this is Miss Garrison

CYNTHIA. How do you do, Mr. Wainwright?

PERRY. If you really want to know, Miss Garrison, I am living for the first time in my life. (*Drops to front of table. PERRY bows low*) Oh, pretty good!

DALLAS. Perry! What is the matter with you this morning?

PERRY. The tense is wrong, Dallas. Whatever may have been the matter there is nothing the matter now. (*Bows as before*) Oh, not so bad.

CYNTHIA. Is this his regular gait or is he just warming up?

PERRY. Warming up. Well, I like that. Alwyn, did you hear that? (PERRY goes up and joins BENNETT up c.)

DALLAS. (Goes to MRS. BENNETT and CYNTHIA) And now tell me what you mean by "Being an ant."

MRS. BENNETT. Cynthia has a perfectly absurd idea that——

CYNTHIA. Pardon me, but it isn't absurd. I haven't a dollar in the world; I won't live on my friends and—so—I'm going to work.

DALLAS. Work!

(CYNTHIA nods.)

CYNTHIA. Yes.

DALLAS. What can you do?

CYNTHIA. Don't know. I understand English pretty well, and can spell and punctuate properly. Perhaps they will help somehow.

DALLAS. (To MRS. BENNETT) How does Alwyn feel about it?

MRS. BENNETT. Just as I do. (Raising her voice) Don't you, Alwyn?

BENNETT. What is it, mother? (BENNETT and PERRY come down)

MRS. BENNETT. Cynthia—and—work.

BENNETT. I don't like it. But she has made up her mind.

CYNTHIA. Yes, but the question is—what am I to do? If a girl makes a living with horses and dogs——

PERRY. Speaking of dogs, remember I am the owner of Betty and Prince Charlie. (Up c. back of table)

CYNTHIA. I'd not forgotten. (Going to PERRY) How are the darlings?

PERRY. Splendid. I'll tell you a secret about them. They are here.

CYNTHIA. Here?

PERRY. Yes.

CYNTHIA. Where are they? Take me to them. Why didn't you tell me before?

PERRY. Hadn't a chance.

CYNTHIA. Please take me. Please.

PERRY. With pleasure. (*Going to exit, goes c.*) This way.

CYNTHIA. (*To MRS. BENNETT and DALLAS*) You'll excuse me—wont you? (*Going to PERRY*) It's the grandest surprise. You're just lovely. (*CYNTHIA exits c. to r.*)

PERRY. What did I tell you? Oh, pretty good! (*PERRY exits c. and r.*)

DALLAS. How did Cynthia's father lose his money?

BENNETT. (*Crosses to L. of table*) Speculation.

MRS. BENNETT. How I dread speculation. (*THOMPSON enters unseen r. As though to go to table. He sees MRS. BENNETT and gives a start as if recognizing her, and wondering if she would recognize him*) Mr. Garrison married one of my dearest friends. He was cashier of a bank. After awhile they made him president. It was terrible.

DALLAS. What is the real story about Mr. Garrison?

(*THOMPSON grips his hands and sets his teeth. Then he stands, breathless listening.*)

MRS. BENNETT. You tell her, Alwyn.

BENNETT. (*Takes chair from L. of table, places it so that he may lean on it*) Mr. Garrison was considered the most honorable of men. There was not even a breath of suspicion against him. One morning he was found dead.

DALLAS. A suicide?

BENNETT. Yes. The bank was insolvent. The story goes that—On the recommendation of a great financier he had made a large loan. It turned out badly. When he went to the financier about it, he told him of a deal in which he was interested and in which he could recoup the loss without any risk. Mr. Garrison took his advice—and lost! Then he shot himself.

DALLAS. Awful.

BENNETT. But the awful part of the affair was, that his friend, the financier, had deliberately deceived him, for investigation proved that he was on the other side of the deal.

DALLAS. I did not think such things possible.

MRS. BENNETT. Mrs. Garrison—died the next day. She wasn't strong and the shock killed her.

BENNETT. There was a boy, too, wasn't there?

MRS. BENNETT. Yes, a boy at college. I didn't know him very well.

DALLAS. What became of him?

MRS. BENNETT. He dropped out of sight. Went West I believe to avoid the disgrace.

BENNETT. Poor chap! (*Up-stage a little*)

MRS. BENNETT. Poor chap!

(*With an effort THOMPSON pulls himself together and goes to table. MRS. BENNETT sees him, rises and looks at him inquiringly.*)

THOMPSON. I am Mr. Wainwright's secretary. He has sent me for these despatches. (*He picks up the messages. MRS. BENNETT sits again*)

DALLAS. Very well,

(*THOMPSON exits.*)

DALLAS. Has Cynthia no money at all?

MRS. BENNETT. No. She receives a remittance

every month, though, but no one knows from whom it comes.

BENNETT. (*Drops down to back of lounge*) First it was ten dollars monthly, then twenty, then twenty-five and now it's thirty. It has reached her regularly for nine years.

MRS. BENNETT. Isn't it strange?

DALLAS. Very. And a man killed himself; a woman died; (*Rises, crosses to c. of table*) a boy's life was ruined and a little girl was left dependent on friends so that a financier could add to his fortune.

MRS. BENNETT. My husband used to say that most of the men who rise high in finance do it by mounting the corpses of those they had despoiled and betrayed.

(DALLAS *shudders.*)

DALLAS. Awful!

MRS. BENNETT. I thank Heaven no one could say that about him. He was my one love while he lived. He is my one ideal now.

BENNETT. Mother. (*BENNETT goes to corner of lounge R.*)

DALLAS. And yet Mr. Bennett left a great fortune.

MRS. BENNETT. (*Crosses to table L., sits in chair*) Great for those times but not for these, and every dollar of it honestly earned. You don't remember him of course.

DALLAS. No. (*R. of table*)

MRS. BENNETT. He was a magnificent man; I met him soon after he returned from the war, a young but distinguished soldier. Then he went into business and was as successful in peace as he had been in war? He never did a dishonorable act and never took a dishonest dollar and when my boy dies I hope that will be his epitaph.

DALLAS. Amen!

BENNETT. Amen! (*Pause. He looks at DALLAS, conveys to audience the idea that he wishes to be alone with her. BENNETT comes down front of sofa*) Don't forget, mother. You have a guest.

MRS. BENNETT. A guest?

BENNETT. And she's alone with Perry—without a chaperone. We don't need one.

MRS. BENNETT. Mm. Oh, certainly. (*Rises. DALLAS goes R.*) They're at the kennels, aren't they?

BENNETT. Yes.

MRS. BENNETT. Then I'll find them. (*Goes to exit*) You'll let me know when Cynthia can dispense with my services? (*Exit*)

BENNETT. Now! Seen the paper? (*Drops down R. and takes it up from table*)

DALLAS. Yes.

BENNETT. (*Goes R. of table*) Where do you suppose they get things like that? Gibbs. Imagine him engaged to any girl. He's too busy making money. While he was asking her he might miss a commission on two hundred shares. (*BENNETT laughs*)

DALLAS. Mr. Gibbs is here.

BENNETT. Here!

DALLAS. Yes.

BENNETT. (*Seriously*) You don't mean it. (*Goes toward DALLAS, laughs to himself*) Oh, pshaw! (*There is a pause. The possibility of the truth slowly dawns on BENNETT. He turns to DALLAS and looks at her*) Dallas! There isn't anything in it, is there?

DALLAS. Why not? (*Rises*)

BENNETT. You don't mean to say that you care for him?

DALLAS. You haven't the right to ask me that. (*Moves to back of table*)

BENNETT. But I have. You know I love you.

DALLAS. No! You are like a child who finds someone has taken a toy to which he is accustomed. For a time he thinks he will never get over it but in a little while he finds another—and then—forgets.

BENNETT. Do you really think that—of me? (*Sits R. of table*)

DALLAS. If you do love me, do something that will make me proud of you. I am not proud of you now.

BENNETT. Dallas!

DALLAS. Your father left you great wealth. (*To c., back of table*) What have you done with it? Your youth is going fast. What have you done with it? You have wealth and strength. What have you done with them? Above all—you have talent and power—what have you done with them?

BENNETT. Why I—I never thought——!

DALLAS. I'll tell you what you have done with them. You have wasted them—everyone. Your father fought and won. You are an idler—a looker-on. You are merely a rich man's son—a man to whom money was left.

BENNETT. What is there for me to do?

DALLAS. Do a man's work to the best of your ability. When you made those speeches for Mr. Lorimer at the last election—I thought——

BENNETT. That was only to help a friend and for the fun of the thing.

DALLAS. It's always that way. Why not do something for yourself and do it seriously. There are many opportunities. Take one——

BENNETT. And if I do—(*Rises and turns to Dallas*) Have I a chance—for you?

DALLAS. I have told Mr. Gibbs—to wait. (*Turns away*)

BENNETT. Then I have a chance. (*Moves to back of table*) And what you have said is true. I realize it. I have always realized it. Why, only the other day, I'd made up my mind to quit this having

fun and do something—I'd made up my mind to it—but Perry came over and took me to the ball-game and I forgot about it. (*She shakes her head and moves away; crosses to L. of table and sits in chair L.*) But it will be different now. Till to-day I have been a rich man's son. Now I'm really going to start for myself. I'm going to begin on my own account for you. (*Moves to L. of table*)

DALLAS. You can win if you'll try.

BENNETT. Don't be afraid, I'll try. (*Sits on end of table*)

DALLAS. The trouble is nothing less than a blow will arouse you.

BENNETT. A blow?

DALLAS. Would you have told me what you did just now if it hadn't been for that article? (*Points to newspaper. There is a slight pause*) It has always been the same. The first time I saw you you were playing football. You were playing a hard game, but not a fighting game—the game that wins. Suddenly, when your head was turned, a man struck you. It was a cowardly, unfair blow and it roused all the fighting blood in your veins. Five minutes later the man who struck you was carried off the field. That made no difference though. Your blood was up and you played with a fierceness that frightened me. You won the game and it was the blow that roused you. Do you remember?

BENNETT. I should say I do. Do you know who struck it?

DALLAS. No.

BENNETT. Gibbs.

DALLAS. Impossible.

BENNETT. Ask him.

DALLAS. Mr. Gibbs.

(*The voices of PHELAN and the BUTLER are heard off L. PHELAN is asking for admittance and*

MILLS is protesting. BUTLER enters L. He is evidently perturbed.)

DALLAS. What is it, Mills?

BUTLER. A—a gentleman to see Mr. Wainwright, Miss.

DALLAS. Well?

BUTLER. He has no card, but he says his name is Phelan and that he is here by appointment.

DALLAS. Ask Mr. Wainwright if he has such an appointment.

BUTLER. Yes, Miss. (BUTLER exits R.)

DALLAS. Mills has to be careful about Uncle's visitors—so many strange people come to see him.

WAINWRIGHT. (Off R.) Certainly I'll see Mr. Phelan. (BUTLER re-enters followed by MR. WAINWRIGHT and GIBBS) Show Mr. Phelan in here at once.

BUTLER. Yes, sir. (BUTLER exits L.)

WAINWRIGHT. (Seeing BENNETT c. Back of table) Oh, I didn't know you were here, Mr. Bennett. I'll see my visitor in the library.

DALLAS. Don't bother, Uncle, Alwyn and I were just going to join his mother. (To GIBBS) Won't you come, Mr. Gibbs?

GIBBS. Can't just now, thank you.

DALLAS. I'm sorry. Come Alwyn. (L. of window. DALLAS and BENNETT exeunt c. to R.)

GIBBS. He is "Alwyn." I am Mr. Gibbs. You see? (R.)

WAINWRIGHT. I do. Perhaps you're right after all.

GIBBS. I know I'm right.

WAINWRIGHT. Perhaps you are. (c.)

(PHELAN enters L. He is a man of fifty or fifty-five, of at least the average height, somewhat florid of face, and of considerable bulk. He is

shrewd but good-natured; courageous yet good humored, and he has learned worldly wisdom in the school of experience. He is an East side ALDERMAN, who rules his domain because the people know him and like him. Starting at the foot of the police ladder years before, he worked his way up till he became chief and when retired by a new executive he went to the ward where he was always popular and ever since, has always been elected by a big majority.)

PHELAN. How do!

WAINWRIGHT. (*Goes toward PHELAN, takes his hand, then passes him to GIBBS R.*) Alderman! (*They shake hands*) Let me introduce Mr. Gibbs. This is Alderman Phelan.

PHELAN. Of the Eighth. (*Goes R. C.*) The only man who run independent last election and carried his ward.

GIBBS. Glad to meet you, Alderman. (R.)

PHELAN. Same to you, young fellow.

WAINWRIGHT. Were you on time?

PHELAN. About fifteen minutes behind, that's all.

(WAINWRIGHT *looks at watch.*)

PHELAN. (*To WAINWRIGHT*) Say, Horigan thinks he can down me next Fall. Nothin' to it. I'll bury his man so deep a steam-shovel couldn't dig him out. (R. C.)

WAINWRIGHT. Confident, aren't you?

PHELAN. Why not? There ain't a voter in the Ward—Dago, Greek or White—that I can't call by his first name and tell him how many children he has! I've got my people right where I want 'em, Horigan! Wait, that's all!

WAINWRIGHT. Why don't you and Horigan bury the hatchet?

PHELAN. Bury the hatchet! The only time I ever bury any hatchet with Dick Horigan his head'll go with it.

GIBBS. Is it wise to fight so strong a man?

PHELAN. (R. *Goes to* GIBBS) It's all right for me because he's got to come into my territory to whip me! Besides, I'd be lonesome if I didn't have a fight on hand. I'm the original red rag to the bull of trouble and I like it.

WAINWRIGHT. I want you and Horigan to be friends. (L. C.)

PHELAN. No, sir.

WAINWRIGHT. Come now, if I had invited Horigan to meet you here to-day, for instance, wouldn't he be welcome?

PHELAN. Sure—he'd be as welcome as the typhoid fever.

WAINWRIGHT. Well, you might as well know—I have invited him.

PHELAN. Here—to meet me.

WAINWRIGHT. Yes. But he doesn't know it any more than you did.

PHELAN. If that's what you're plannin' you're wastin' time.

WAINWRIGHT. He's liable to be here any minute now.

PHELAN. (*Goes up c. Back of table*) Then there's no use my waitin' any longer.

WAINWRIGHT. You're not afraid to meet him, are you?

PHELAN. (*Going to table. Quietly, but smartly*) Afraid! There ain't a man living I'm afraid to meet. (BUTLER *enters* L.)

BUTLER. Mr. Horigan, sir.

WAINWRIGHT. Show him in.

(GIBBS *rises*. BUTLER *exits* L. HORIGAN *enters* L.)

He is a man of fifty-five of great physical strength and bull-dog courage and tenacity. These are evidenced by his firm step and his square jaws. He is essentially a fighting man, giving no quarter and asking none. He is a man of the people, has risen from the ranks till he is now the political boss of a great city. Rich and extremely powerful. As he has risen in influence he has acquired the habit of correct speech, somewhat by study and application but mostly absorption, till his lapses are now infrequent and not common. He radiates physical energy, strength, courage and stubbornness.)

HORIGAN. (L.) Good-morning, I was thinking that—(Sees PHELAN. *There is a short pause.* L. C.)

NOTE:—The enmity existing between Phelan and Horigan must be shown sharply here by the attitude of the two men.

PHELAN. (*Indicating WAINWRIGHT*) Ask him.

HORIGAN. (*To WAINWRIGHT*) Well, what is it?

WAINWRIGHT. I disliked to see two such good fellows pulling against each other and I wanted to bring you together.

HORIGAN. What did he say?

PHELAN. I said there was nothing doing——

HORIGAN. That goes double with me.

WAINWRIGHT. Isn't there any possible way I can—reconcile——

HORIGAN. There isn't—(*Crossing to table L. C. To PHELAN back of table C.*) I'm after you, Phelan—and this time I'm going to get you.

PHELAN. You're as welcome as the flowers in Spring! And don't forget this. I'm after you!

HORIGAN. (*Scornfully*) You! Huh!

PHELAN. Yes. Me. Huh! You're standin' pretty solid now, but remember—you ain't no sphinx! you can be pulled down!

HORIGAN. At least we understand each other——

PHELAN. Yes, and always did.

HORIGAN. (*To WAINWRIGHT*) If this was the business you asked me to come here, on, I want to say—(*Up to WAINWRIGHT L.*)

WAINWRIGHT. It wasn't the business.

HORIGAN. Then perhaps we can get to it—(*Goes to c. above table c.*) When he's gone.

PHELAN. That's the end o' the session for me. (*To WAINWRIGHT*) So long——

WAINWRIGHT. I'm sorry Alderman. (*Goes to PHELAN*)

PHELAN. That's all right. (*HORIGAN comes down L. table. To GIBBS*) So long.

GIBBS. Good-bye, Mr. Phelan.

PHELAN. (*To HORIGAN*) As for you, some day I'll drop something on you, and if it don't knock you flat I'll come back and walk around you to see what's holdin' you up. (*Exits L.*)

HORIGAN. Damn him. (*c. above table. WAINWRIGHT comes down*)

WAINWRIGHT. Let me introduce Mr. Gibbs.

HORIGAN. How are you?

GIBBS. Mr. Horigan.

HORIGAN. (*Going to WAINWRIGHT*) Did you hear what he said; "He was going after me." Jim Phelan pull me down!

GIBBS. There's not much chance of that——

HORIGAN. There's none. But I'll get him. (*Go to GIBBS R.*) I've got to get him for the sake of discipline. If he can defy me and win, others might think they can—so—I've got to get him. (*Crosses to WAINWRIGHT c., below table*) Why did you bring him here?

(*GIBBS sits R.*)

WAINWRIGHT. I am interested in a matter to which there is sure to be opposition.

HORIGAN. Well?

WAINWRIGHT. And I want to win over any possible ally of the enemy before war is declared.

HORIGAN. You're a clever man, Mr. Wainwright, but there are some things even you don't understand. I daren't compromise with Phelan if I wanted. If a man in the organization starts a fight with me there's no turning back. I never compromise with him. I crush him. That has kept me where I am. Everyone of them knows that with me it's obey or fight, and if it's a fight then it's a fight to a finish.

(The above was the dictum of RICHARD CROCKER ; during the above GIBBS drops down a little and HORIGAN finishes speech at L. corner of table. JUDGE NEWMAN enters L.)

JUDGE. Good-morning, Mr. Horigan. I confess to being a little anxious. I hope I'm not too early.

HORIGAN. For what?

JUDGE. Hasn't Mr. Wainwright spoken to you?

WAINWRIGHT. *(Going up a little)* I've had no opportunity, Judge.

HORIGAN. *(Going to JUDGE L. c.)* If it's the re-nomination you mean, I'm where I was before, I think you've had your feet in the trough long enough. It's time somebody else had a chance.

JUDGE. But consider the circumstances, Mr. Horigan. I've given the best years of my life to the judiciary and Mrs. Newman says that——

HORIGAN. We've got to take care of our active workers—the men we can depend on—the men who'll do the right thing.

JUDGE. I'm sure I've always done what's right.

HORIGAN. I said "*The men who'll do the right thing.*"

JUDGE. *(Appealing)* Charles!

WAINWRIGHT. (*Coming down*) Leave the matter in my hands. I think I can adjust it to the satisfaction of all concerned.

JUDGE. (WAINWRIGHT *moves* R. C.) If you can, you'll put me under lasting obligations.

HORIGAN. I'll say this much—if anybody can get you the nomination Mr. Wainwright can. And now, we have some business to talk over. (*He turns back on* JUDGE)

JUDGE. Certainly. (*To* WAINWRIGHT) I depend on you.

WAINWRIGHT. You may!

JUDGE. Thank you, Charlie! (JUDGE *exits* L.)

WAINWRIGHT. What is there against him? (*Crosses to* HORIGAN)

HORIGAN. (*Going to* WAINWRIGHT) Nothing. There's a man we can depend on more. You know as well as I do that it's mighty convenient at times to have your case come up before the right judge.

WAINWRIGHT. He'll do. Let him have the nomination.

HORIGAN. Sure, if you want it. Anyway, it's best, to keep these judges on the anxious seat a bit—it teaches 'em their place! And now shall we get to business.

WAINWRIGHT. Yes.

HORIGAN. (*Crosses to* GIBBS R. C.) Then you'll excuse my saying it but I never talk business before a third party. Mr. Wainwright knows that.

GIBBS. A very good rule indeed, Mr. Horigan. I'm glad to have met you.

HORIGAN. Huh! Huh! (*Crosses* R.)

GIBBS. (*To* WAINWRIGHT) I'll join the others. (*GIBBS exits* C. to R.)

HORIGAN. Well.

WAINWRIGHT. Just a minute. (BUTLER *appears*) See that I am not disturbed.

BUTLER. Yes, sir. (*Exits*)

HORIGAN. And now? (*Sits in chair* R.)

WAINWRIGHT. (*R. of table*) What do you think your chances are at the coming election?

HORIGAN. With plenty of money and the right man—we can win.

WAINWRIGHT. That's what I think.

HORIGAN. *And we've got to have the right man.*

WAINWRIGHT. And we'll get him. Now the point is this. The Borough street Railway, after the election will apply to the City Council for a franchise for a line from the docks to the river by way of Union St. and Franklin Ave.

HORIGAN. And as you own the City Surface Line which is the Borough's rival you want the franchise killed when it comes up before the Alderman.

WAINWRIGHT. Not at all. I want the franchise granted and I want it to be perpetual.

HORIGAN. You want it—! (*Rises and listens*) What's that?

WAINWRIGHT. What?

HORIGAN. That ticking?

WAINWRIGHT. It's my private wire—in there. (*Points R.*)

HORIGAN. Is there an operator? (*Going to WAINWRIGHT*)

WAINWRIGHT. Yes.

HORIGAN. Suppose he's listening.

WAINWRIGHT. He isn't.

HORIGAN. Suppose he is.

WAINWRIGHT. He's my private secretary—been with me for years. He's the one man I can trust.

HORIGAN. Just the same I don't want him to overhear this. Send him away.

WAINWRIGHT. He's all right I tell you. Don't be unreasonable.

HORIGAN. If you're sure.

WAINWRIGHT. I am. (*HORIGAN crosses to L., back of table*) As I said before—I want the franchise passed.

HORIGAN. I heard it but I don't understand it—what's the game? The Charter of the Borough Company becomes void if it is merged with your line.

WAINWRIGHT. But there's nothing to prevent one man from owning both roads and running them separately, is there?

HORIGAN. No.

WAINWRIGHT. *Well I own both roads.*

HORIGAN. You do.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Rises, moves to c.*) I have already secured—very cautiously—a majority of Borough Stock, and I am adding to my interest every day though nobody knows it but you, Gibbs and myself. Can you see what will happen to Borough Stock after the franchise is granted and the news of my control becomes known? (*In front of table c.*)

HORIGAN. It will go kiting.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Goes to HORIGAN*) I imagine that it will! And now, you have it. (*Crosses down L.*)

HORIGAN. And the franchise is to be perpetual.

WAINWRIGHT. Yes.

HORIGAN. The people will make an awful scream.

WAINWRIGHT. Much good it will do them if we have the votes.

HORIGAN. Well—how does it interest me? (*Moves R. and sits in chair R. of table*)

WAINWRIGHT. (*Moves up to HORIGAN*) I am a firm believer in the present administration. I am willing to give two hundred thousand dollars toward the expenses of the coming election to help keep the present party in power.

HORIGAN. That's fair enough but—(*R. c.* HORIGAN *points to himself*)

WAINWRIGHT. I will carry fifteen thousand

shares of Borough stock for your account at the market price, sixty-three.

HORIGAN. Yes?

WAINWRIGHT. In two days after the franchise is granted the stock should jump twenty-five points. That would give you a profit of three hundred and seventy-five thousand dollars. (*Turns away a little*)

HORIGAN. Three hundred and seventy-five thousand for me, and you will make millions! (*Rises*) I thought I was a better friend of yours than that.

WAINWRIGHT. You did?

HORIGAN. (*Moves to WAINWRIGHT*) I value my friendship at twenty-five thousand shares at the present market price. Then if the stock does advance as you say it will, and I sell out, I shall make—a little over six hundred thousand dollars.

WAINWRIGHT. Well—I hardly expected—that—!

HORIGAN. What's the use of beating about the bush? You need me and those are my terms. You can take them or leave them.

WAINWRIGHT. (R. C.) They are higher than I expected but rather than have any misunderstanding—

HORIGAN. (R.) You accept?

WAINWRIGHT. I do.

HORIGAN. Then it's settled. (*Offers hand to WAINWRIGHT*) And now about the election. We must have the right man for Mayor—we must——! (*HORIGAN stops and looks quickly at door*)

WAINWRIGHT. (*Goes toward HORIGAN*) What is it?

HORIGAN. Nothing. (*From this point HORIGAN quietly works toward door R. up and down*) With the wrong man we haven't the ghost of a chance. We might as well not make the fight if our candidate isn't right. I've been thinking this thing over. I've been thinking it over—and—(*HORIGAN suddenly opens door R. THOMPSON enters quietly with a mes-*

sage. He gives it to WAINWRIGHT and exits again R. without a word. HORIZAN closes door and stands with his back to it. There is a pause) He was listening.

WAINWRIGHT. Nothing of the kind.

HORIZAN. (*Goes to WAINWRIGHT*) He was, I tell you.

WAINWRIGHT. I don't believe it. I have to trust someone—and he's the one.

HORIZAN. (*Crosses to L.*) I don't trust nobody. I write no letters, I sign no receipts, I keep no accounts, I have no witnesses. It's my word and the other fellow's. I keep mine and I see that he keeps his. As for that man. (*Pointing off R.*) Watch him. (*The above was the method and policy of CROCKER*)

WAINWRIGHT. I don't have to. I've tried him and I know. (*He shrugs shoulders*) You were saying about the man for Mayor? (*Moves to HORIZAN*)

HORIZAN. He's got to be a man the public knows nothing against. A machine man won't do. A corporation man won't do. A politician won't do.

WAINWRIGHT. What do you want—an angel?

HORIZAN. I'd like a young man—a man of fine family—a man with a good name—a young man with money, so the people won't think he's after the graft—a man the public thinks is out to do his duty, *but one we know we can handle.*

WAINWRIGHT. I see. How would Gibbs do?

HORIZAN. No. He's a Stock Exchange and Corporation man.

WAINWRIGHT. There's young Sawyer.

HORIZAN. A fool—and his face advertises it.

WAINWRIGHT. Young Farley.

HORIZAN. He wears a monocle. That kills *him* before he starts.

WAINWRIGHT. Have you thought of anybody?

HORIGAN. Do you know a chap named Bennett—
Alwyn Bennett—

WAINWRIGHT. Yes.

HORIGAN. What's the matter with him?

WAINWRIGHT. I should never have thought of him.

HORIGAN. Why not? He comes nearer filling the bill than anybody I know. His father was one of the organization too and got some big contracts from it years ago.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Reflectively*) Bennett! (*Going a little to R.*)

HORIGAN. I met young Bennett last election when he came to help Lorimer just for the fun of the thing. The boys all liked him. He was a good mixer—and made a fine speech. I think he's our man.

WAINWRIGHT. Perhaps he is. He's here.

HORIGAN. Here?

WAINWRIGHT. (*Going to bell on wall L.* HORIGAN *goes R. a little*) He's a neighbor of ours. I'll send for him. (*Rings bell. BUTLER appears*) Tell Mr. Bennett I'd like to see him as soon as convenient. (*BUTLER exits C. to R.*) I imagine he'll do. (*WAINWRIGHT comes down*)

HORIGAN. Wait. Can we handle him.

WAINWRIGHT. I think so. *He's in love with my niece.*

HORIGAN. Oh!

WAINWRIGHT. And, until her brother is twenty-five I control the money their father left them.

HORIGAN. (*Going R.*) Oh! Easy!

WAINWRIGHT. Then it's Bennett.

HORIGAN. Yes, if he agrees.

(MILLS *enters.*)

MILLS. Mr. Bennett is playing tennis, sir. He says he'll be here in a moment. (*MILLS exits L.*)

HORIGAN. Tennis! We'll teach him a better game than that. (R.)

(Enter BENNETT to back of table)

BENNETT. You want to see me.

WAINWRIGHT. I do. You know Mr. Horigan.

BENNETT. Certainly. I had the pleasure of meeting Mr. Horigan at the last election. (*Going down*
R. To HORIGAN) How do you do?

(HORIGAN *nods*.)

WAINWRIGHT. Mr. Horigan and I have just been discussing you.

BENNETT. Yes?

WAINWRIGHT. How would you like to run for Mayor?

BENNETT. For Mayor?

WAINWRIGHT. Yes.

BENNETT. Stop your joking.

HORIGAN. We're not joking. (*Goes to BENNETT*)
I control the nomination. It's yours if you want it.

BENNETT. Really?

HORIGAN. Yes.

BENNETT. You take my breath away! Why, oh, why, have you selected me?

HORIGAN. Because we want you. (*Up to BENNETT*)

BENNETT. That answers, but doesn't explain.

HORIGAN. It'll be a hard fight.

BENNETT. Now I see. You think you have no chance and have chosen me for the sacrifice. Offer received but declined with thanks. (*Goes up*)

WAINWRIGHT. Mr. Horigan expects to win.

HORIGAN. That's what I do. But win or lose it's a fine chance for a young man to show what he's made of.

BENNETT. (*Reflectively*) So it is. So it is.
(*Going down a little*)

HORIGAN. See what it means if you win. Even if you lose you'll make a name for yourself.

BENNETT. (*To HORIGAN*) If I accept do you really think there's a fighting chance?

WAINWRIGHT. Yes.

HORIGAN. And more—there's a great chance.

BENNETT. Then I accept.

WAINWRIGHT. Good!

HORIGAN. Fine!

BENNETT. But if I am elected I shall keep my oath of office. (*Crosses R.*)

WAINWRIGHT. Certainly.

(*BENNETT crosses down R.*)

BENNETT. Don't make any mistake, gentlemen, I mean that. If elected I shall keep my oath of office.

HORIGAN. (*L. C. BENNETT R.—WAINWRIGHT C.*)
Sure you will, sure. Sure you will.

(*To WAINWRIGHT.*)

CURTAIN.

—

ACT II.

SCENE:—*The action takes place in the executive office of the MAYOR. It is a high, noble-looking room, the mural decorations of which are quiet and dignified, and the furnishings and furniture in accord with them. The MAYOR'S flat desk is R. and several chairs are about office. There are two entrances one about L. 2 from the waiting room; and one R. above the desk and leading to an inner office. The time is about seven months later than ACT I. It is afternoon.*

DISCOVERED:—*When the curtain rises CYNTHIA enters from L. dressed as if for the street, crosses the stage and exits R. INGRAM enters R. and stands waiting for CYNTHIA to re-enter. He is a man of about sixty, not above the average height and a little feeble. He wears a door-keeper's uniform, he has in hand the list of appointments for the afternoon and for the following morning. CYNTHIA re-enters R. having taken off her hat and coat.*

CYNTHIA. (*Crosses to table c.*) What is it, Ingram?

INGRAM. I was wondering if this was *all* his Honor's appointments for this afternoon, miss. (*Crosses to R. of table*)

CYNTHIA. We'll see. (*CYNTHIA goes to desk, picks up a sheet of paper and looks at it*) First, there's Alderman Phelan.

INGRAM. Yes, Miss.

CYNTHIA. Then there's Mr. Wainwright.

INGRAM. Is that *all*, Miss?

CYNTHIA. Yes, Ingram.

INGRAM. It's very light for this afternoon.

CYNTHIA. Isn't it.

INGRAM. Could we compare the appointments for to-morrow morning now?

CYNTHIA. Certainly. (*Picks up another sheet*) The Comptroller at nine-thirty.

INGRAM. Yes.

CYNTHIA. Then the report from the Board of Estimate—then the District Attorney—then the Committee on the new water supply—then the chief-of-police—then a delegation from the Citizens Union, and then Alderman Roberts.

INGRAM. Thank you. I wouldn't like there to be any mistake. It's been many a day since the wrong party got past my gate. (*Moves a little R.*)

CYNTHIA. How long have you been the Mayor's

door-keeper. (*Moves to L. of table and sits in chair*)

INGRAM. Twenty-five years, Miss.

CYNTHIA. What a long time.

INGRAM. I've seen them come and I've seen them go, but His Honor's the youngest man I've ever seen in *that* chair. It's a great responsibility he has.

CYNTHIA. Yes, indeed.

INGRAM. And to think I knew his father before him—that I served under him during the war.

CYNTHIA. Does Mr. Bennett know that?

INGRAM. Not from me, Miss, I wouldn't presume to tell him.

CYNTHIA. Oh, wouldn't you?

(INGRAM *hands mail to CYNTHIA. CYNTHIA begins to open the letters.*)

INGRAM. (*Still gently. Moves to front of table and gives letters to CYNTHIA*) The people that try to get past my gate—and the excuses they invent—and the lies they tell. They worried me for a long time, but I'm used to it now.

CYNTHIA. (*Indicating correspondence*) The private secretary and I have our troubles too.

INGRAM. It's the same way at the Administration Ball. Lots of people have tried to get by me, but I've shown them——

CYNTHIA. The Administration Ball is a great occasion, I'm told.

INGRAM. Indeed it is, Miss. Everybody in politics goes. So do many of the big moneyed men too.

CYNTHIA. It must be funny to see *them* dancing.

INGRAM. It isn't to dance they go, Miss.

CYNTHIA. They go because they know they'll meet the people they *want* to meet. Why some of the biggest deals made are arranged the night of the Administration Ball. (PERRY *knocks on door R. Enters*) Mr. Wainwright! (*Rises*)

PERRY. How did you guess? (*Bus. toward desk*)

INGRAM. It's all right for the gentlemen to wait here, isn't it, Miss.

CYNTHIA. Certainly. (*Sits*)

INGRAM. That's what I thought, Miss. That's what I thought. (*INGRAM exits R.*)

PERRY. (*Goes to desk*) And how is the assistant private secretary?

CYNTHIA. *Pardon me.* Mr. Walters is away this afternoon and I am secretary pro tem.

PERRY. *Pardon me!*

CYNTHIA. And, now, permit me in my official capacity as secretary pro tem, to ask what are you *doing* here?

PERRY. I have a message for His Honor, nobody sent it but I thought I'd bring it just the same.

CYNTHIA. His Honor is not back from lunch.

PERRY. I've something for you—as well. (*Going back of desk around desk to L. of CYNTHIA*)

CYNTHIA. Yes? (*Rises and goes in front of desk*)

PERRY. A photograph. (*PERRY hands photograph to CYNTHIA*)

CYNTHIA. Why, it's Betty and Prince Charlie.

PERRY. Yes. You evidently didn't notice it, but I'm there, too! There I am at the end of the leash! At this end—not that.

CYNTHIA. I saw you of course, but the dogs—the darling dogs! (*She kisses the picture*)

PERRY. You see *me*—but you *kiss* them. That's the first time I ever wished I was a dog.

CYNTHIA. Don't be foolish. Do you know what I'm going to do with this?

PERRY. I can imagine.

CYNTHIA. What?

PERRY. (*Position to go R. of desk. Crosses around back of desk*) Cut out the dogs' heads, place one each side of your locket, wear them next

your heart, and throw the rest of it in the waste-paper basket.

CYNTHIA. Nothing of the kind; I'm going to frame it, just as it is, and write underneath it: "The Darlings."

PERRY. (*Going to desk R. and leaning hands on it. Bending towards CYNTHIA*) Why not write: "The Three Darlings."

CYNTHIA. Because there are only two.

(BENNETT enters R.)

BENNETT. Hello, Perry.

PERRY. Why, hello, Alwyn, I mean "Your Honor."

BENNETT. (*Gives hat to INGRAM*) None of that. What brings you *this time*. (*Taking off gloves and coming down R.*)

PERRY. I have a message for you—(*Crosses R., to BENNETT*)

BENNETT. Yes.

PERRY. Dallas is home.

BENNETT. What did she say?

PERRY. Say?

BENNETT. Yes. The message.

PERRY. Oh, the message.

BENNETT. Certainly.

PERRY. Of course, the message. (*To CYNTHIA*) See, he wants to know about the message——

BENNETT. Well, what were you to tell me?

PERRY. Why, I was to tell you—I was to tell you——

BENNETT. Yes——

PERRY. I was to tell you—that she's home.

BENNETT. (*Comes to PERRY*) Did Dallas say you were to tell me that?

PERRY. No.

BENNETT. Then whom is the message from?

PERRY. From me! She's home; came this morning.

BENNETT. I know it. (*Gives coat to INGRAM. INGRAM exits R. Going to chair, back of desk, and sitting there. PERRY goes to R. of desk*) The Custom House 'phoned me the minute the boat had docked. Don't you come here with any such excuses.

PERRY. (*To CYNTHIA*) What do you think of that! Dallas gets back from a six months' trip to Europe; I came up here specially to tell him about it, and he accuses and reproaches me. Talk about ingratitude. (*Goes R. a little*)

CYNTHIA. Awful.

BENNETT. How is she—well?

PERRY. Yes, and looking fine. (*Going to R. of desk*)

BENNETT. I don't suppose she happened to mention *me*.

PERRY. No, oh, no.

BENNETT. No!

PERRY. Only asked about seven thousand questions the first five minutes. That's all.

BENNETT. What did she ask about me! (*Crosses down to PERRY R.*)

PERRY. Why—she asked whether you still had the same watch charm—if you parted your hair on the side—what colored neckties you were wearing——!

BENNETT. Stop it—and tell me.

PERRY. She didn't have to ask what kind of a campaign you made—she had kept posted on that while on the other side—but she *did* want to know all about this Borough Street Railway Franchise the papers are full of, and I'll be hanged if I could tell her.

BENNETT. Well, I haven't time to instruct you in such matters *now*—(*Crosses to back of table*) I think I shall drop around to—your house for a few minutes this afternoon.

PERRY. What did you say?

BENNETT. This afternoon! Your house! Me!

PERRY. (*Moves to R. of table*) Oh, you beat Gibbs with the flowers all right. Your bunch made his look like Maggie Murphy's off-the-ice roses when the picnic is over.

BENNETT. (*PERRY works behind BENNETT to L. of him. To CYNTHIA*) We've never had such light engagement, have we?

CYNTHIA. No.

BENNETT. Ingram will think he has a half holiday.

CYNTHIA. He and I had quite a talk just now. Did you know he served in the army under your father?

BENNETT. Did he?

CYNTHIA. Yes. (*BENNETT rings bell*)

BENNETT. Why didn't he tell me.

PERRY. (*Going down L.*) So your father was a soldier. I thought he was an engineer and contractor.

BENNETT. That was afterwards. (*Note; INGRAM enters R. BENNETT plays this scene with complete sincerity but he must avoid being too serious. To INGRAM; INGRAM crosses to R. of desk*) And you served under my father?

INGRAM. Yes, your Honor. And a fine soldier he was, too.

BENNETT. Can you recall him?

INGRAM. As though it were yesterday. I remember him first as a Lieutenant and what a gay, light-hearted boy he was. He'd always a pleasant word for everybody and wherever there was fighting he'd be in it if he could get there. We would have died for him.

BENNETT. Dear old Dad!

INGRAM. After we were mustered out I didn't see him for over twenty years. I know that he'd gone into business, and was the head of a big con-

tracting firm, but I didn't set eyes on him until one day he came to that very gate out there. I knew him in a minute and saluted. He looked at me for a second and then said; "Bless me, if it isn't Ingram." He remembered me after all that time. He was a fine man if ever there was one, and, if your honor will excuse me, you should be proud of having such a father.

BENNETT. *I am proud, Ingram. (Rises)*

INGRAM. I saw him often after that, sir. He built the big aqueduct and the library building and had to come here to talk things over with the Mayor, and the City Engineer. He still had the pleasant word, and many a time, when he had to wait a minute, we've sat out there and talked about the old times that would never come back for either of us.

BENNETT. *(Giving INGRAM his hand)* We'll often talk about them, too.

INGRAM. Thank you, your Honor! Is that all, your Honor?

BENNETT. All for the present.

INGRAM. Then just once—for your father's son, your Honor—*(INGRAM draws himself up—salutes and exits R.)*

BENNETT. *(Very sincerely)* For my father's son.

CYNTHIA. *(Gently)* No wonder your mother loved him.

PERRY. *(Getting back to Comedy)* Ingram's all right! *(Goes to the R. of BENNETT, crosses in front of desk)* Say, Alwyn, I'd like to see anybody get his job away from him.

BENNETT. *(Lightly)* So would I. *(The telephone rings, CYNTHIA answers it)*

CYNTHIA. Yes. This is his office—who is it wishes to speak with him! Mrs. Bennett! How do you do. Certainly. *(To BENNETT)* Your mother. *(BENNETT goes to 'phone)*

BENNETT. (*To his mother*) Hello, mother, anything wrong? No? I'm glad of that—I'll be at liberty very soon, but I was going out—certainly I'll wait if you won't be long—(PERRY *sits in chair R.*) What? You have a surprise for me, a pleasant one—what is it? Do tell me—you won't. Very well—good-bye. What? No, I won't go. I'll stay here till you come. Good-bye. (BENNETT *replaces phone*) Mother has a surprise for me.

PERRY. I've been surprised over the phone, too, and generally I didn't like it.

(INGRAM *enters R.*)

INGRAM. Alderman Phelan, your Honor.

BENNETT. (*To PERRY*) By appointment——

PERRY. Then I'm off. (*Rises and moves to table R. To CYNTHIA, above*) Good-bye.

CYNTHIA. Good-bye.

PERRY. (*Goes to exit R. To BENNETT*) Say, Alwyn, don't be surprised if Dallas sends me with another message to-morrow. (PERRY *exits R.*)

BENNETT. You! (*Raises book. To INGRAM*) Show Mr. Phelan in. (INGRAM *exits R. BENNETT sits at his desk. To CYNTHIA*) Perry's a great boy, isn't he?

CYNTHIA. Yes, indeed. (CYNTHIA *takes some of the letters she has opened and exits L. BENNETT picks up document from desk. PHELAN enters R.*)

BENNETT. Well, Alderman, if I'm not mistaken this is the first time you've favored me.

PHELAN. Yes, your honor, this is my first offense. (*Crosses closer to table R.*)

BENNETT. Then I suppose it's something of importance.

PHELAN. That all depends. The papers said this morning that you were going to veto the Borough Street Railway Franchise. If that's so I can take my hat and go.

BENNETT. That was unauthorized. I haven't announced any decision on the bill yet. Here it is.

PHELAN. Then I'm glad I've come. Honest, your Honor, that bill's the coarsest work I've seen. I'll bet that some of the men that voted for it has to go thro' the door sideways to get out with their bundle. (*Sits in chair R.*)

BENNETT. You didn't vote for it.

PHELAN. Not me. I'm not one of Horigan's solid thirteen. I'm no bale of hay for him to buy and sell as he does them.

BENNETT. Pardon me, Alderman, but judging from your generally accepted reputation you should be the last to say such things.

PHELAN. Did you ever hear about set a thief to catch a thief. Well that's me this time.

BENNETT. You're frank enough at any rate.

PHELAN. Sure, when I do the talkin' you don't need any motion pictures! I've been through the game from the go to the cases and this Borough deal is the roughest yet. They must have thought you easy to frame up a thing like that for you.

BENNETT. Why?

PHELAN. Because they know that when the public gets on to it—they won't consider that the Alderman passed it, they'll only remember that you—(*Rises and crosses to R. of table*) signed it. That's what they'll remember—the *Franchise bill* that Bennett signed.

BENNETT. Why do you trouble to tell me this. It isn't for love of me, is it?

PHELAN. No, it ain't exactly for love of you—it's because of Horigan. He's back of this bill and it's crookeder than a footpath through a pine wood.

(INGRAM *enters R.*)

INGRAM. Mr. Wainwright, your Honor?

BENNETT. He's a little ahead of time; may I see him?

PHELAN. Sure, I can wait. (BENNETT *nods to INGRAM who exits R.*) Where shall I go? (*Goes L.—pointing L.*) In there?

BENNETT. (*Going R.*) Stay here. My business with Mr. Wainwright isn't private.

(WAINWRIGHT *enters R.*)

WAINWRIGHT. (*Going to BENNETT*) How do you do?

BENNETT. (*Rising. They shake hands; BENNETT indicates chair which WAINWRIGHT declines*) It was good of you to come.

WAINWRIGHT. (*To PHELAN*) Alderman——

PHELAN. How do?

BENNETT. You're acquainted.

PHELAN. From 'way back.

BENNETT. Then, as your time is valuable, Mr. Wainwright, I'll go to the point at once. I wanted to get your opinion of the Borough Street Railway bill.

WAINWRIGHT. Really—I—I?

PHELAN. He owns the other road; he's against it; give him a hard one.

WAINWRIGHT. Pardon me, but I don't think I am against it. (*R. of table*)

PHELAN. What? (*Going to chair L. sits*)

WAINWRIGHT. I'm inclined to be in favor of it.

PHELAN. (*Whistles softly*) Phew! (PHELAN *watches WAINWRIGHT shrewdly*)

WAINWRIGHT. (BENNETT *sits in chair back of desk*) My line is the Borough's rival in a sense—but only in a sense. In this great city there is room for both of us to live and prosper. Why, then, should we fight each other? (WAINWRIGHT *smiles benignantly*)

PHELAN. Ask me?

WAINWRIGHT. That the Franchise will be beneficial to the Borough people, goes without saying. The passing of the bill by the Council caused a jump in the stock from 63 to 81. The announcement of your veto, which I am assured is unauthorized, caused a drop to-day from 81 to 73. So you see the power in your hands. If you veto the Bill the stock will drop to practically nothing, then what will become of the widows and orphans whose money is invested in it?

PHELAN. Take my advice, see a Doctor. You have enlargement of the heart.

WAINWRIGHT. Phelan will have his joke.

(INGRAM *enters* R.)

BENNETT. Well?

INGRAM. A man who says his name is Thompson has a message for Mr. Wainwright, and says he must deliver it in person.

WAINWRIGHT. (*To* BENNETT) My private secretary.

BENNETT. (*To* INGRAM) Have Mr. Thompson come in——

(INGRAM *exits* R.)

WAINWRIGHT. This is very unusual. I wonder what it means.

PHELAN. (D. L.) If my private secretary bothered me, I'd fire him so quick the movin' picture machine wouldn't be able to catch his movements. (THOMPSON *enters* R. PHELAN *sees* THOMPSON and *eyes him curiously*)

WAINWRIGHT. (*To* BENNETT) Excuse me. (WAINWRIGHT *goes to* THOMPSON) Well?

THOMPSON. (*Apart to* WAINWRIGHT *quickly* R.) Mr. Horigan telephoned, sir, immediately after you left; I told him you were here. He instructed me

to come and to say to you that he wished you to call on him—at once—as it was urgent. He said you would know where to find him.

WAINWRIGHT. (*To THOMPSON*) Very good. (*He goes to BENNETT.* PHELAN *still eyes THOMPSON.* *To BENNETT*) I am extremely sorry that I can't remain to discuss the question further, but a most important matter demands my immediate attention.

BENNETT. I am sorry, too. (*Rises*)

WAINWRIGHT. (*Going R. towards exit*) Please consider carefully all that I have said. If I am not opposed to the Franchise, I do not see how anyone else can reasonably oppose it.

BENNETT. I'll consider it. Thank you for coming.

WAINWRIGHT. Come, Thompson, come.

PHELAN. Just a minute. (*THOMPSON stops,* PHELAN *crosses R. towards THOMPSON.* *To THOMPSON*) How are you?

(*THOMPSON looks at PHELAN and then replies in the tone of a man who does not recognize the one addressing him, but who wishes to be polite.*)

THOMPSON. How do you do, sir?

PHELAN. You *know me*, don't you?

THOMPSON. I think not, sir.

PHELAN. You don't?

THOMPSON. No, sir.

PHELAN. I'm Phelan, Alderman Phelan of the Eighth.

THOMPSON. I have heard of you, of course, sir.

PHELAN. But have never met me.

THOMPSON. Not that I remember, sir.

PHELAN. Mm!

(*THOMPSON exits R.*)

BENNETT. You seemed surprised when Mr. Wainwright said he was in favor of the franchise.

PHELAN. Well, I should say I was. (*Moves to R. of table*) He smiled when he said it, and he never smiles unless he has swallowed the canary.

BENNETT. Then you don't think he was prompted by a sense of justice.

PHELAN. He has no more sense of justice than a four-year-old gorilla. You remember that affair about Garrison, the bank President—the one who was thrown down by his friend the financier?

BENNETT. Yes.

PHELAN. Do you know who the financier was?

BENNETT. No. His name was suppressed.

PHELAN. Wainwright! That's the fellow.
(*Moves down R.*)

BENNETT. Wainwright?

PHELAN. Yep.

BENNETT. (*Raising*) You're sure?

PHELAN. I ought to be—I suppressed it.

BENNETT. You?

PHELAN. Me. You forgot I was chief of Police then.

BENNETT. So you were, and it was Wainwright.
(*Rises and moves down to L. of PHELAN*)

PHELAN. It was. I handled the case myself. So you see he had a fine chance to talk, "justice" and "fairness" to me. (*Crosses to L. C.*) There's something back of all this.

BENNETT. You're right there is. It was at his house that Horigan offered me the nomination.

PHELAN. I wonder if that was the day he sent for me. I met that fellow Gibbs there. The one the papers say is buyin' Borough Stock.

BENNETT. You're getting warm. (*Going towards PHELAN*)

PHELAN. We ought to work this thing out together and when I get Horigan I'll——

BENNETT. I'll have no quarrel with Horigan.

PHELAN. There ain't a trick in this game I don't know. Let me put you wise to some o' the things in that bill. First there's——

BENNETT. I know pretty nearly all there is to know about that bill—I've sat up nights with it alone and I've spent hours over it with my counsel—I've done other things, too, and I have at least *one surprise* in store. Because I have been quiet it does not necessarily mean that I have been asleep.

PHELAN. Your Honor, you are all right.

BENNETT. I'm glad you came, Alderman. Our motives are different but the end is the same and we may be able to help each other.

PHELAN. You bet we can.

(INGRAM *enters* R.)

INGRAM. Mrs. Bennett, your Honor.

BENNETT. Certainly.

(INGRAM *exits*.)

PHELAN. I didn't know you was married?

BENNETT. My mother.

PHELAN. (*Going* L.) Oh.

(MRS. BENNETT *enters* R.)

BENNETT. Mother.

MRS. BENNETT. You'll be glad you waited, Alwyn. (*Crosses to R. of table.* DALLAS *enters* R.)

BENNETT. And Dallas! (*Moves to DALLAS*) Well, this is a surprise.

MRS. BENNETT. Didn't I tell you?

DALLAS. How do you do, your Honor!

BENNETT. Now! Now! My, but I'm glad to see you. (*Goes to DALLAS and shakes hands, talks ad lib*) PHELAN *coughs*) Mother, let me present Alderman Phelan.

MRS. BENNETT. Mr. Phelan!

PHELAN. Ma'am.

BENNETT. And this is Miss Wainwright, Alderman Phelan.

DALLAS. (*Going L., crosses to PHELAN*) Alderman Phelan, who gives turkeys to the poor at Christmas?

PHELAN. Yes, miss. I turkey 'em in the winter and I picnic 'em in the summer.

DALLAS. I've *read* of your picnics.

PHELAN. They're the days of my life, Miss. I've had as many as twenty-five hundred at one of 'em—most of 'em women and children; women who never get a breath of fresh air and children who never see a blade of grass except, when I take 'em out. It's a happy day when I down a man who's agin' me, it's a happy day when I help a man who's *for* me, but the *happiest* days *for me* are my picnic days.

BENNETT. Why, Phelan—(*Moves to back of desk C.*)

PHELAN. I know. I should remember the old woman's parrot. (*To DALLAS*) Excuse me, Miss.

DALLAS. There's no need. (*Sits L. of desk*)

MRS. BENNETT. But where is Mr. Gibbs? (*Sits R. of table*)

(BENNETT *places chair for* MRS. BENNETT.)

BENNETT. Mr. Gibbs!

(NOTE:—MR. GIBBS *plays this scene smilingly and with every appearance of good nature. Enters R.*)

GIBBS. Here I am. I stopped for a word with that old door-keeper of yours. And how is the Mayor this afternoon?

BENNETT. Quite well, thank you.

GIBBS. Alderman! (R.)

PHELAN. How do.

MRS. BENNETT. When I 'phoned you, Alwyn, I was at the Wainwrights'. I'd dropped in to see Dallas, this being her first day in town. Just as we were ready to come Mr. Gibbs called.

GIBBS. And being naturally of a gallant disposition I came as their escort.

BENNETT. Very kind of you, indeed. Sit down, please. I think we have enough seats. (*To PHELAN*) Phelan.

GIBBS. I can stay only a moment so I'll stand if you don't mind.

PHELAN. Me too.

BENNETT. Certainly.

GIBBS. And there is His Honor, the man who with a stroke of his pen can send Borough stock up to ninety or a hundred or down to practically nothing.

DALLAS. *Can* Mr. Bennett do that?

GIBBS. He *can*, indeed. The mere announcement that he intended to veto their franchise caused the stock to break eight point to-day.

DALLAS. *Are* you going to veto it?

BENNETT. I can't tell.

GIBBS. Of course he isn't—it wouldn't be fair to his friends?

DALLAS. Why?

GIBBS. Well—it's generally understood that the men back of the bill are those who gave him his present opportunity, and it would not be right to use his power to the disadvantage of those who gave it to him.

BENNETT. Whom do you mean by "the men back of the bill?"

GIBBS. I am merely repeating what is being generally said. For my own part I'm glad the break came to-day. It enabled those who believe in the stock to get some at a low figure.

PHELAN. It is being "generally said" that your firm has more than anybody.

GIBBS. We have our share, there's no denying that. (*To DALLAS*) And so you see, Miss Wainwright, how openly I placed myself in Mr. Bennett's hands.

BENNETT. This isn't fair.

GIBBS. Why not, it's perfectly true. You can either give me a fortune or take one from me. (*To DALLAS and MRS. BENNETT*) I am not in the least afraid. I know he will do the right thing.

BENNETT. (*Moves down to GIBBS R.*) Mr. Gibbs, you have no right to thrust this information on me in this manner.

GIBBS. I thought I was paying you the highest compliment possible.

BENNETT. I knew your position fairly well before you stated it, but it will not influence me in the least.

GIBBS. Certainly not, why should it?

BENNETT. You can answer that question better than I can.

GIBBS. I'm sorry I ruffled you.

BENNETT. You didn't.

GIBBS. But I must say that I see no reason for your abruptness. Do you, Miss Wainwright?

DALLAS. Really, Mr. Gibbs——

BENNETT. Please leave Miss Wainwright out of the matter. (*A slight movement to D. R.*)

GIBBS. Anything you say! Well, my minute's up! Good-bye, Mrs. Bennett. (*MRS. BENNETT bows*) Good-afternoon, Miss Wainwright.

DALLAS. Good-afternoon, Mr. Gibbs.

GIBBS. I shall see you again soon I hope?

DALLAS. I hope so.

GIBBS. Thank you. (*He goes to BENNETT*) I'm sorry you misconstrued what I said but—(*He offers hand with every appearance of frankness*) There's no hard feeling I hope.

BENNETT. Certainly not. (*He makes the best of the situation and takes GIBBS' hand*)

GIBBS. I'm glad. Good-day.

BENNETT. Good-day.

GIBBS. (*Going*) Alderman.

(*PHELAN nods. GIBBS exits R.*)

PHELAN. I think I'll be movin' too. (*To DALLAS*) Good-afternoon, Miss.

DALLAS. (*Rising and offering hand*) Good-afternoon, Alderman. I'm glad to have met you.

PHELAN. Thank you? Miss. (*PHELAN crosses to R. To MRS. BENNETT*) Ma'am.

MRS. BENNETT. Good-afternoon. *I'm glad to have met you too.*

PHELAN. You're sure you ain't fishin' for an invite to one o' my picnics. (*All laugh*) Don't forget this, though. If you hear of any woman or child that would like to go let me know about it—and they don't have to belong to my ward either. (*PHELAN exits R.*)

MRS. BENNETT. I really didn't wish to *bring Mr. Gibbs* but when he offered to come what could I do?

BENNETT. I understand, mother.

MRS. BENNETT. Isn't Dallas looking well?

BENNETT. (*Crosses to c.*) Splendid.

DALLAS. Why shouldn't I? I've had a glorious holiday—England, France, Italy, the Mediterranean, Egypt—and I've lived every minute of it. Even the rough voyage home was enjoyable. They simply couldn't keep me off the deck.

BENNETT. Couldn't have kept me either if you were there——

DALLAS. Where's Cynthia?

BENNETT. Here. (*BENNETT opens door L.*)
Some one to see you.

(*CYNTHIA enters L.*)

CYNTHIA. To see me.

BENNETT. Yes.

CYNTHIA. (*Sees DALLAS*) Dallas!

DALLAS. Cynthia. (*They kiss*)

CYNTHIA. Turn around and let me look at you. (*DALLAS turns around*) Heavenly. Isn't that hat the cutest thing. (*To BENNETT*) Did you ever see anything so becoming?

BENNETT. Never.

CYNTHIA. Take off your coat, Dallas. (*BENNETT helps take off DALLAS' coat*) Take it off. I want to see what the dress is like. (*The coat is off. CYNTHIA eyes DALLAS critically*) Are those—(*Describing the dress*) going to be the fashion?

DALLAS. They are.

CYNTHIA. I just hate them. I suppose I'll have to wear them, though, if they're going to be the style.

DALLAS. I suppose you will. (*To BENNETT*) I know what you are thinking "Isn't that just like a woman."

BENNETT. No, I'm not. (*Goes to DALLAS*) When it comes to following the styles the men are just as bad.

DALLAS. They are—but you are the first man who ever acknowledged it—(*Goes to Mrs. BENNETT*) Isn't he?

(*CYNTHIA comes down L.*)

Mrs. BENNETT. I think so.

(*BENNETT unseen by DALLAS and Mrs. BENNETT pantomimes for CYNTHIA to take his mother into the room R. After bus., CYNTHIA understands.*)

CYNTHIA. (*To Mrs. BENNETT*) Come and see my room, Mrs. Bennett!

MRS. BENNETT. I've seen it, my dear.

CYNTHIA. But I have something *new* I want to show you.

MRS. BENNETT. Oh! What? (*Going to CYNTHIA. BENNETT goes up a little*)

CYNTHIA. I can't tell you. It's a secret.

DALLAS. Can't I see it, too?

BENNETT. (*Coming down and interposing*) No.

CYNTHIA. Certainly not.

BENNETT. This is a secret for mother alone.

MRS. BENNETT. But, my dear——

(CYNTHIA *points to BENNETT and DALLAS.*

CYNTHIA and MRS. BENNETT *exeunt* R. *There is a slight pause. Then DALLAS impulsively offers her hand to BENNETT.*)

DALLAS. I'm so *glad* to see you. (R. C.)

BENNETT. (*Taking DALLAS hand*) Really? (L. C.)

DALLAS. Really.

BENNETT. Then I'll tell you a secret. You're not half as glad as I am.

DALLAS. I read all about your campaign. Perry sent me the papers every day.

BENNETT. I always *knew* he was good for *something*.

DALLAS. They arrived in bundles. I would take them to my room, read the political news then throw them aside. When I had finished I looked like a lighthouse surrounded by a sea of newspapers.

BENNETT. (*Going to DALLAS*) You *were* a lighthouse. I steered my course by you.

DALLAS. And when I read of your election, and that your splendid campaign had carried the whole ticket to victory—and saw what the papers predicted for you—then I was proud—proud that a man had found himself and that perhaps I had helped him.

BENNETT. *You did it.*

DALLAS. You are the man of the hour. The youngest mayor the city has ever known. And what a future for you.

BENNETT. It isn't the future I'm thinking about. It's now, this very minute. (*He takes both her hands. There is a short pause. He looks at her admiringly*) If such a thing were possible, you look sweeter than ever.

DALLAS. Oh, Alwyn.

BENNETT. Sweeter than ever! I meant it too when I said "You did it." Why did I accept the nomination—because I thought it would please you. Why did I work as I did during the campaign—because I thought it would please you.

DALLAS. It more than pleases me.

BENNETT. You told me to find my work, I think I have found it. You told me to do it to the best of my ability. I have tried. You have made a man of me. Whatever I have done—you are the cause of it.

DALLAS. You are wrong.

BENNETT. You were the cause of it.

DALLAS. No. I did not give you strength, nor courage, nor determination, nor the power to do things. They were within you—always.

BENNETT. If they were, you roused them to life.

DALLAS. If I did, I thank God for it. You are going to do big *things* in the world, *big things*!

BENNETT. No matter what I do, it will mean nothing—unless you share it. I have grown since you went away. As I have grown my *love* for you has grown. It is the one thing in my life—the one thing in my life—the one real thing—success, power, office will mean nothing without you.

(*The door R. opens quickly and HORIGAN enters. He is evidently in great rage. DALLAS turns up stage R. of table to C., then moves down L.*)

HORIGAN. I'm told that you—Oh. I didn't know there was a lady here.

BENNETT. Well there *is* a lady here. (BENNETT *crosses to* HORIGAN)

HORIGAN. I'll wait——

BENNETT. (*Indicating out R.*) They should have told you.

HORIGAN. They probably did only I didn't stop to listen. Let me know when you're ready.

BENNETT. You needn't wait.

HORIGAN. Oh, yes, I need. There is a matter that's got to be settled to-day—now. (*Indicating R.*) I'll be out there. (*Exits R.*)

DALLAS. Who is he?

BENNETT. Horigan.

DALLAS. The—boss?

BENNETT. Yes. Did you see the way he came in here as though he were the proprietor and I an employee. (*Goes L.*) If he thinks that——

DALLAS. Be careful, Alwyn? (*Goes to* BENNETT) Remember how powerful he is.

BENNETT. He won't let me forget.

DALLAS. (L. C.) Promise me you'll be careful. I know how headstrong and reckless you can be.

BENNETT. Dallas.

DALLAS. I saw it, you know. Promise me

BENNETT. Very well.

DALLAS. Thank you. My coat, please.

(BENNETT *gets coat from table c.*)

BENNETT. This evening, may I see you?

DALLAS. Do.

BENNETT. I will.

(DALLAS *indicates her coat*; BENNETT *helps her to put it on*. BENNETT *goes to door L.* DALLAS *goes to door R.*)

BENNETT. Mother.

MRS. BENNETT. (*Off L.*) Yes.

BENNETT. Dallas is going.

(*Crosses back of table to door R. MRS. BENNETT enters L. followed by CYNTHIA.*)

MRS. BENNETT. Is she——

CYNTHIA. So soon——

(*BENNETT goes to door R. and opens door.*)

DALLAS. A gentleman is waiting to see Alwyn.

MRS. BENNETT. Oh. (*To CYNTHIA*) Good-bye, dear——

CYNTHIA. Good-bye.

(*MRS. BENNETT. crosses to door R.*)

DALLAS. (*To CYNTHIA*) When are you coming to see me?

CYNTHIA. Some evening before long, I'll 'phone you.

DALLAS. Do.

MRS. BENNETT. Good-bye, Alwyn. (*Exits R.*)

BENNETT. Good-bye, mother. (*To DALLAS*) Don't forget, I'm to see you to-night. (*At door R.*)

DALLAS. I'll remember.

(*DALLAS exits, closing door R. There is a short pause. BENNETT sits at his desk. HORIGAN enters. His anger has not subsided and he shows it in every look and tone. R. of table.*)

HORIGAN. (*His anger plainly evident*) I understand Phelan was here this afternoon.

BENNETT. (*Quietly*) He was.

HORIGAN. About what?

BENNETT. Business.

HORIGAN. What business?

BENNETT. My business.

HORIGAN. Well, I want you *to understand one thing*. No man can be friendly with Horigan and Phelan at the same time. It's him or me. Is that *plain*!

BENNETT. (*Still quietly*) Perfectly, and now I want you to understand one thing. No man can bully me either in this room or out of it. *Is that plain*?

HORIGAN. Do you mean to say——

BENNETT. You will oblige me also in the future by at least knocking on the door before you come in. This is my office and no other man's.

HORIGAN. Do you mean to say——

BENNETT. (*Playing for laugh*) That's twice you've said *that*! Is it your hearing or my *speech* that is defective?

HORIGAN. (*Turns, puts coat and hat on table R., then turns to R. of table*) Bennett, you and me have got to come to a show down. You're a bright young fellow; you made a great fight, and won; the public likes you and the press likes you and you're the best material the party's got to-day. If you do what's right there'll be nothing you can't have. But you've got to do what's right.

BENNETT. What do you *mean* by doing what's right!

HORIGAN. I mean you've got to do the square thing by them who made you.

BENNETT. And who did make me?

HORIGAN. Dick Horigan. *Who were* you till I took you up—nobody! If I didn't make you the mayor of this town, I'd like to know *who* did.

BENNETT. The people did.

HORIGAN. The hell they did. (*Moves R.*) Who gave you the nomination?

BENNETT. You. I admit that. But the people elected me, and I'm going to do exactly as you ad-

wise. (*Rising and talking across the desk*) *I'm going to do the right thing by those who made me.*

HORIGAN. You mean to say——

BENNETT. There it is again! However *I'll tell you this time.* I mean that before I sign any bill—(*Takes up bill*) I've got to know that it's for the good—not of the party—not of the organization, but of the city. I told you I should keep my oath of office, I intend do it.

HORIGAN. You'll sign that bill or——

BENNETT. Or what?

HORIGAN. Or your political career ends right now. You think you're on top and that you can stay on top without the man who put you there. But you can't. I can pull you down just as easy as I put you up, and I'll do it unless you sign that bill. I pledged my word on it long before the election and you've got to do it. (*Crosses down R.*)

BENNETT. I made no such pledge. Before *you* did you should have been sure that you could deliver the goods.

HORIGAN. Then, you *won't* sign it.

BENNETT. (*Goes to HORIGAN.*) You said we should have to come to a show down. This is where we do it. You have no collar on my neck, I wear no man's tag. You can't sell me either for present or future delivery. If I sign that bill it will be because I think it an honest one, not because you agreed that I should do it.

HORIGAN. I don't care *why* you sign it—so long as you *do* sign it.

BENNETT. Do you think it an *honest* bill?

HORIGAN. Do I!—What do you take me for. I don't care whether it's honest or not. (*Moves down R.*)

BENNETT. Well, I do, and I think it's crooked.

HORIGAN. Oh, you do, eh? (*Returns to BENNETT*)

BENNETT. Yes, I do. (*BENNETT crosses down*

to HORIGAN R.) It permits them to use any motive-power they please; it allows them to charge five-cent fares without transfers; the little joker in paragraph six allows them to build a subway if they desire it; under paragraph eight they can do an express business; they could also build a conduit and rent it for telegraph or telephone wires; in fact it gives the streets absolutely to the company above and below, not for ten years, not fifty years, not for a hundred years, but forever. This franchise delivers to the Borough Company, bound hand and foot, not only us, but our children, and their children's children until the day of Judgment and I tell you that the time for such things has gone by, never to return.

HORIGAN. So we've elected a reformer have we?

BENNETT. (*Crosses back to c. of desk*) I was placed in my position to protect and defend the rights and property of my constituents. This bill asks me to give away a franchise for which I am offered two million dollars cash.

HORIGAN. What?

BENNETT. I thought that would surprise you. In addition to this cash offer, the gentleman agrees to give to the City ten per cent of the gross receipts, and to turn over to the country the entire plant at a fair valuation at the end of fifty years if the City desires it.

HORIGAN. Who does that? (*Goes to desk. BENNETT hands him the letter*) I guess it was one of those yellow newspapers. You don't suppose he means it do you?

BENNETT. I'm sure he does. Besides he agrees to deposit a check for one million dollars to bind the bargain. And now, why is the Council so eager to give away what this man is willing to pay for so liberally.

HORIGAN. How should I know. (*Crosses L.*)

BENNETT. You do know, and yet I'll tell you. The answer is graft, Mr. Horigan—graft!

HORIGAN. What do you call graft? (*Turns and faces BENNETT*)

BENNETT. Graft is money to which a man is not morally entitled. (*Sits in chair c.*)

HORIGAN. Then every man is a grafter. A lawyer will take a fee for showing his client how he can break the law and evade the punishment—graft! Churches and Colleges accept money they know has been obtained by fraud and oppression—graft!—Newspapers and magazines publish advertisements they know to be fakes and worse—graft! A railroad president accepts stock in a firm which ships over his line—graft! Senators become millionaires on a salary of seventy-five hundred dollars a year—graft! And so it goes, high and low, rich and poor—they *all* graft, in fact the man who *doesn't* graft hasn't the chance or else he's a fool. (*Moves down l.*)

BENNETT. You're wrong. Honesty pays now just as it always has done and always will do. Why did the people of Wisconsin send La Follette to the Senate—because whatever his faults they knew he was an honest man! Why did the people of Missouri make Folk their governor, because whatever his faults they knew he was an honest man! And why did the people of the United States make Roosevelt President, because whatever his faults they knew he was an honest man! This bill isn't honest, but I am, and I won't sign it.

HORIGAN. (*Crosses to him*) Then veto it. Veto it! And to prove what I think of the newspapers—and the *people*—and to show you what size you are and what I think of *you*—I'll pass it *over* your head.

BENNETT. It takes a two-thirds majority to do that. You'll need fourteen votes. You have only thirteen. I'll see that you don't get the other.

HORIGAN. And I'll see that I do. (*Down L. a little*)

BENNETT. (*Rises*) Moreover I know there's bribery here. I'll find who gives it and I'll find who takes it and then I'll jail them—everyone. I'll not only jail the Alderman who takes the bribes, I'll jail the "gentleman" who gives them.

HORIGAN. (*Moves up to table*) Then let me tell you that the man who's back of this bill, the man you'll have to jail, is Mr. Wainwright, the uncle of the girl you're in love with.

BENNETT. That's no great news.

HORIGAN. Then perhaps this is.—Every dollar of her fortune, and every dollar of her brother's fortune has been invested by Wainwright in Borough Street Railway Stock. And if you beat this franchise you'll ruin them both. You hear, *you'll ruin them both—the girl and her brother*. And now, do what you like about it, and *be damned* to you. (BENNETT takes pen, writes on franchise and shows it to HORIGAN) You've vetoed it.

BENNETT. I've vetoed it. And now do as *you* like about it and *be damned* to you.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE:—*The scene is a parlor in the Charlton Hotel on the floor where the administration Ball is being held. It is luxuriously furnished in the manner usual to such rooms. There is an entrance c. leading to a hall and one L. leading to another room.*

(PERRY and CYNTHIA enter L. Two Step at Rise.)

PERRY. (L. C.) I tell you, it's true.

CYNTHIA. (L.) It can't be.

PERRY. But it is. Thompson has been watching you since the moment you came in.

(BENNETT and MRS. BENNETT enter c. from L. and go down stage R.)

CYNTHIA. But I've never even seen Mr. Thompson.

PERRY. I'll keep an eye on Thompson.

(CYNTHIA sits at table on seat down stage.)

BENNETT. (To CYNTHIA c.) Did you enjoy the dance?

CYNTHIA. It was heavenly.

PERRY. (L. C.) If there's anything better than a two-step—with the right partner—all a man has to do is to introduce me to it, and I'm mortgaged to him for life.

BENNETT. As you once said "Sailing swan-like on a sea of bliss."

PERRY. (c.) Exactly! Can you see a swan—a snow-white swan—with web-feet on the crest of a wave like that. (*Bus.*) Then down into the trough like that! (*Bus.*) And then—(*With bus.*) Up and down—and up and down—up and down! Isn't it poetic?

CYNTHIA. No wonder you kept me waiting if I dance like that.

(BENNETT and MRS. BENNETT laugh, seated R.)

PERRY. Ah, but you don't! You don't!

BENNETT. It's on you, Perry. (R. C.)

PERRY. I don't care. The idea's great. (*Going to table L.; sits R. of table*)

(GIBBS and DALLAS enter c. from L. as if from the dance.)

GIBBS. (c.) Mrs. Bennett!

(MRS. BENNETT bows.)

DALLAS. (To MRS. BENNETT) May I sit by you?

MRS. BENNETT. Of course.

DALLAS. (To GIBBS) Thank you. (DALLAS sits by MRS. BENNETT) Mr. Gibbs is an excellent dancer but, somehow—!

GIBBS. (c.) Somehow—to-night—he did not dance quite so well as usual.

DALLAS. I didn't say that. In fact I am sure the fault was mine.

GIBBS. That's very good of you. (To CYNTHIA) When we dance I hope to be more successful; I shall find you here?

CYNTHIA. Yes.

GIBBS. Thank you! (GIBBS bows and exits c. to R.)

PERRY. (To CYNTHIA) Are you going to dance with him?

CYNTHIA. Why not? He's a splendid partner.

PERRY. Of course I don't wish him any hard luck—(Rises, crosses to c.) But I shouldn't lose any sleep if he were to slip and sprain his ankle.

DALLAS. Perry!

CYNTHIA. Did you ever!

PERRY. Very well. To show I'm not heard-hearted—make it his right ankle.

MRS. BENNETT. You don't like Mr. Gibbs, do you, Perry?

PERRY. Not so that you would notice it.

DALLAS. Perry plays favorites.

PERRY. And when I do they generally win. (PERRY sits R. of table L.)

DALLAS. I'm not dancing the next dance.

BENNETT. Neither am I.

PERRY. (*To DALLAS*) But the following one?

DALLAS. (*Looking at program*) Mr. Gibbs.

PERRY. Again?

DALLAS. They *are* rather close but then—no one else asked me.

BENNETT. The next to that is mine.

DALLAS. Yes.

MRS. BENNETT. I hope you won't quarrel as you did when you were children.

DALLAS. Did we?

MRS. BENNETT. Often. You used to fight with him too——

PERRY. There! Don't ever talk about *my* disposition.

DALLAS. I don't remember it. (*To BENNETT*) Do you?

BENNETT. Not at all. I remember though once when I had an apple that you wanted—!

PERRY. (*Putting up his hand*) Teacher, I know the answer—she took it.

BENNETT. Go to the head of the class.

(*Bus. for PERRY going to head of class. Goes and sits on chair up L. Music starts.*)

DALLAS. Did I take it?

(BENNETT *nods.*)

BENNETT. Strange how I should remember a little thing like that.

DALLAS. It wasn't little then. After all, time is the only thing that can give us a sense of proportion.

PERRY. Meaning——

DALLAS. What seems important to-day is of no importance to-morrow, and the thing we think *this*

year we can't live *without*, next year we wonder *why* we wanted it at all.

PERRY. Don't like the lesson. Recess. Recess.
(PERRY *gets up and joins* CYNTHIA.)

MRS. BENNETT. You are pessimistic to-night.

DALLAS. Yes, I am.

BENNETT. Why?

DALLAS. A mood, I suppose.

PERRY. What does she mean.

CYNTHIA. (To PERRY) Why, that if you—want a girl this year—that you wouldn't—want her *next* year?

(*Music—March P. P.*)

PERRY. (To CYNTHIA) There's only one girl I want and I shall want her forever and ever.

CYNTHIA. (To PERRY) There's no denying it—you are a nice boy.

PERRY. (To CYNTHIA) I am crazy about you.

(GIBBS *re-enters.*)

GIBBS. (To CYNTHIA) Are you ready?

CYNTHIA. Certainly. (To PERRY) Excuse me.
(CYNTHIA and GIBBS *exeunt c. to L.* PERRY *follows up c. then returns down R. C.*)

PERRY. (*Down c.*) Isn't he the human kill-joy! If I were starving and a piece of pie was in front of me and just as I was going to take it an unseen hand reached out and snatched it away—I'd say "Gibbs" and know I was right.

DALLAS. He's not quite so bad as that.

PERRY. (*Going up c. L.*) Well, *I'm going*. There are *some* people I like to watch.

DALLAS. (*Going to PERRY up c.*) Take *me*, please. I want an ice.

BENNETT. Let me.

DALLAS. No, thank you.

BENNETT. Oh, Dallas!

DALLAS. Please stay with your mother. I am coming back.

BENNETT. Oh! Thank you. (DALLAS and PERRY *exeunt c. to L. Still with an apparent air of buoyancy*) Great affair, isn't it? (*Crosses to mother*)

MRS. BENNETT. (*Gently*) What's wrong, dear?

BENNETT. Wrong?

MRS. BENNETT. You can't deceive me, Alwyn. Is it—Dallas?

BENNETT. Why, mother—!

MRS. BENNETT. I don't think you have been to her house more than once since she came back.

BENNETT. She is living with her uncle.

MRS. BENNETT. Well?

BENNETT. I exposed him as the backer of the Borough Franchise Bill. I am *fighting* that bill—and Mr. Wainwright—in every way I can, and I'm not mincing matters, either. Dallas lives in his house. Don't you see?

MRS. BENNETT. I hadn't thought of it in that way. How unfortunate.

BENNETT. There's another thing—even *more* unfortunate.

MRS. BENNETT. Well?

BENNETT. This is in confidence—absolutely.

MRS. BENNETT. Certainly.

BENNETT. Her fortune—and Perry's—are invested in Borough stock. If I do my duty and defeat the bill I ruin them both.

MRS. BENNETT. Alwyn!

BENNETT. It was her uncle's doing. He thought to tie my hands by it. Clever work, wasn't it?

MRS. BENNETT. It was dastardly! And what a position to place you in! My poor boy!

BENNETT. I've hit on a way of saving them.

MRS. BENNETT. Have you. How?

BENNETT. The day after I vetoed the bill I an-

nounced openly that I would fight it to the end and advised all owners of the stock to sell their holdings.

MRS. BENNETT. Yes, but Mr. Wainwright replied that the bill would pass and told the stockholders *not* to sell.

BENNETT. He did. Well, that day, I sent for Perry and explained. On my advice Perry made a demand on his uncle for the stock which belonged to Dallas and himself.

MRS. BENNETT. What did Mr. Wainwright do?

BENNETT. Refused to surrender it as I knew he would.

MRS. BENNETT. And then?

BENNETT. Then I told Perry to sell short an amount equal to the number of shares owned by him and Dallas and I advanced him the necessary money. And so, no matter what happens, neither he nor Dallas can lose a dollar.

MRS. BENNETT. Has Dallas been told of this?

BENNETT. Certainly not. I want her love—not her gratitude. To make sure that she shouldn't know, I made Perry give me his word of honor not to tell anyone about it under any circumstances. He also promised me not to sell one share more than he and Dallas held. It was to be a matter of *protection* for them—not a stock speculation for profit.

MRS. BENNETT. Of course—(*Rises, crosses to L. c.*) It is right for you to protect the interests of Dallas and Perry but, in the meantime, what of Dallas, herself?

BENNETT. Of Dallas? (*Rises*)

MRS. BENNETT. *And you.* What of the feeling—the sympathy—between you. Is it as before? (*Short pause. Places hands on his shoulders*) Remember I am your mother, and I love you.

BENNETT. (*Arms about her*) No, it isn't. I am constrained because I can't *explain*. She's constrained because she knows there is something I don't explain.

MRS. BENNETT. Why not tell her everything.

BENNETT. How can I say, "I love you, Dallas, but I am not only opposing your uncle, but I am trying to beggar both your brother and yourself." In any case it is only till Friday. After that I can make everything clear.

(PHELAN enters briskly from R.)

PHELAN. (*Speaking as he comes on*) You were right, your honor. He is. (*Sees MRS. BENNETT R., stops*) Excuse me.

MRS. BENNETT. You wish to see my son.

PHELAN. Nothin' important, Ma'am. Nothin' important! (*MRS. BENNETT stops as if to remain, about to sit L.*) Still, if it's all the same to you——

MRS. BENNETT. I understand. (*Rises. Going L.*) I'll see you later, dear. (*To BENNETT. MRS. BENNETT exits L.*)

BENNETT. (C.) Well?

PHELAN. (R.) You guessed it. Roberts is their man.

BENNETT. If Horigan gets him they win.

PHELAN. If he gets him. But if he don't—Well, I'll hand Dick Horigan a jolt that'll set his birthday back about five years! What are you goin' to do?

BENNETT. Before he leaves to-night I must know positively where he stands. So keep an eye on him and don't let him go without my seeing him.

(DALLAS enters C. from L. down R.)

DALLAS. (*Speaking as she comes in*) I'm true to my promise you see! Why, where's Mrs. Bennett?

PHELAN. I'm afraid I drove her away. (*Going R.*)

DALLAS. How cruel of you.

PHELAN. Yes, Miss! But you'll excuse me.

won't you? When it comes to cruelty I think I know where to draw the line! (*Winking at BENNETT, going*) Excuse me. (*PHELAN exits to R.*)

DALLAS. Well—(*Sits R. on sofa*)

BENNETT. (R. C.) I'm so glad you came to-night.

DALLAS. You weren't glad enough to ask me to come——

BENNETT. You know why—don't you?

DALLAS. (*Hesitatingly*) No——

BENNETT. No?

DALLAS. A—Not absolutely.

BENNETT. Ah! But you do——

DALLAS. There are several things I don't know—absolutely—one in particular.

BENNETT. What?

DALLAS. You haven't been to see me since the day I returned.

BENNETT. No, but you've not had much chance to be lonesome. Mr. Gibbs has been very constant.

DALLAS. Can't you at least be as—friendly—as you were?

BENNETT. We can never be "friends" again, Dallas. (*Going L.*) The time for that passed long ago. Between *us* it must be all or nothing. (*There is a short pause*) I shouldn't say this to-night. The time hasn't come. But it will come—soon and then—! (*Going back to DALLAS*) Listen, Dallas, I am opposing your uncle.

DALLAS. It has been made very evident to me. (*Rises and moves R.*)

BENNETT. Don't think it is easy for me either. I must do it or surrender a fight which I set out to win, and which I intend to win if it's possible.

DALLAS. *I recognize that spirit.* (*Down R. Music stops*)

BENNETT. In addition to your uncle it involves others in a way I can't explain to you now—(*To DALLAS*)

DALLAS. Others?

BENNETT. Yes. There are conditions—obstacles——

DALLAS. Obstacles?

BENNETT. Of course you don't understand and I can't make it clear. But on Saturday I can. On Saturday I shall be able to explain everything. Meanwhile, no matter how the struggle goes, no matter what you may hear or read, always remember this one thing, Dallas—I love you.

DALLAS. I don't understand and I don't know what to say.

BENNETT. Say nothing, wait. (*Two step*)

(HORIGAN and WAINWRIGHT enter c. from L., HORIGAN sees BENNETT and DALLAS and stops. Comes down L. c.)

DALLAS. (R.) Uncle.

BENNETT. (R. c.) Good-evening.

WAINWRIGHT. (C.) Good-evening.

BENNETT. (*To DALLAS*) Shall we go? (*Offering arm*)

DALLAS. Please. (*A look at HORIGAN. BENNETT and DALLAS exeunt R. talking*)

HORIGAN. (C.) There's something I don't like. Is she on your side or his?

WAINWRIGHT. She's her own mistress. I can't forbid her *speaking* to the man though I told her as plainly as I could that he wasn't welcome at my house. You were saying about Roberts?

HORIGAN. I can get Roberts *all right*.

(WILLIAMS enters hurriedly from L. He is about forty-five and is HORIGAN'S leader in the Council. He comes down L.)

WILLIAMS. Mr. Horigan.

HORIGAN. Well, Williams, what is it?

WILLIAMS. Ellis—he's deserted us!	} (Together)
HORIGAN. What! (Goes to WILLIAMS)	
WAINWRIGHT. Ellis?	

WILLIAMS. Yes. I've just received a note from him saying his wife was ill and he had left with her for Hot Springs, Virginia, and so couldn't be at the meeting Friday.

HORIGAN. He *will* be there—the dog. (c.)

WAINWRIGHT. How are the others?

WILLIAMS. We've never had a fight like Bennett's giving us—and well, I think some of them would like to weaken.

HORIGAN. *I'll fix them!* (To WILLIAMS) Now about Ellis. You go after him by the first train and have him back here on Friday *without fail*—understand, without fail!

WILLIAMS. (*Starts up*) I'll do the best I can.

HORIGAN. One thing more. (WILLIAMS *comes to* HORIGAN) Get word—(WILLIAMS *stops*) quietly to Roberts. I'd like to see him here. But whatever you do—don't fail to bring back Ellis, even if you have to chloroform him!

WILLIAMS. Right! (WILLIAMS *exits c. to R.*)

WAINWRIGHT. What do you think?

HORIGAN. It looks bad. If we could only get to Bennett!

WAINWRIGHT. Impossible.

HORIGAN. No man's impossible. I have one hook on my line yet, and I think it will land him. I wonder what his price is.

(GIBBS *enters c. R. down L.*)

GIBBS. Any news?

WAINWRIGHT. *You are enjoying yourself, I suppose?*

GIBBS. Hardly. I practically offended one partner and have just surrendered another.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Going to GIBBS L. HORIZAN going R.*) You're not asleep *to-night* then if you were this morning?

GIBBS. Asleep?

WAINWRIGHT. Why didn't you let me know about that block of stock that was sold early?

GIBBS. (*A little uneasily*) I knew nothing about it.

WAINWRIGHT. Well, other people did. I don't suppose you know who bought it either?

GIBBS. (*As before*) No! Of course not.

WAINWRIGHT. You'd better keep your eyes open. Somebody is tailing on to our deal.

HORIZAN. Tailing on!

WAINWRIGHT. Some big blocks of Borough stock have been thrown on the market lately and have been quietly absorbed. I don't know who bought them—(*To GIBBS*) Do you?

GIBBS. I told you "no."

WAINWRIGHT. Well you should. That's what you are in the deal for! However, the man who bought it will probably wish he hadn't. (c.)

GIBBS. (L.) Why?

WAINWRIGHT. (c.) Because we're likely to lose—that's why. (*Going up a little*)

GIBBS. (*Getting alarmed*) Lose! I understood we had another man and, with Mr. Horizan's thirteen, that made everything sure.

HORIZAN. That's what *we* thought, only one of men has slipped.

GIBBS. He's gone?

HORIZAN. Yes.

GIBBS. (*Greatly alarmed*) Then we'll lose anyway—and if we do—(*To himself*) Good God! If we do!

HORIZAN. We haven't quite lost yet. I think I can get my man back.

GIBBS. (*Eagerly*) Of course you can. And you'll try—won't you, you'll try?

HORIGAN. (*Savagely and playing for laugh*) No, I'll go home and play mumble-peg! What's the matter with you?

GIBBS. Why I—I——

WAINWRIGHT. He has 25% of the deal.

HORIGAN. A man shouldn't play the game if he can't pay for his chips. (*To GIBBS*) Is Judge Newman out there?

GIBBS. Yes.

HORIGAN. Tell him I want to see him.

GIBBS. Yes, but I'd like——

HORIGAN. (*R.*) This is *my* end of the deal. Tell him.

(*GIBBS exits L.*)

WAINWRIGHT. What do you want with Newman? (*Drop down L. c.*)

HORIGAN. To talk to Bennett. (*c.*)

WAINWRIGHT. *That* won't do any good.

HORIGAN. It can't do any harm. I wonder where Roberts is. I sent word to him by that secretary of yours that I wanted to see him.

WAINWRIGHT. Good. I thought Thompson might be useful. That's the reason I told him to come.

HORIGAN. You've looked up Roberts' notes?

WAINWRIGHT. (*Takes papers from pockets to refer to*) Yes. There are two of them, one for fifteen thousand—the other for seven. They are secured by the mortgage on his manufacturing plant.

HORIGAN. You feel sure he can't meet them?

WAINWRIGHT. Yes. They've been extended twice already.

(*JUDGE NEWMAN enters L. WAINWRIGHT up stage R.*)

JUDGE. Mr. Gibbs said you wished to see me.
(L. C.)

HORIGAN. Yes. (*Crosses to JUDGE*)

JUDGE. (*Beaming*) Delightful dance, isn't it? My girls have had all the best partners, and Mrs. Newman is *so pleased!* (*To JUDGE L. C.*)

HORIGAN. (*Going to JUDGE*) I want you to tell Bennett to keep his hands off the Borough Franchise Bill.

JUDGE. (*Getting alarmed*) I—I don't think I know him—well enough for that.

HORIGAN. You're quick enough to *ask* favors. How about returning them?

JUDGE. I know Mr. Horigan, but——

WAINWRIGHT. *I got you the nomination; remember that.* (*Drops down R. C.*)

HORIGAN. *Right here you make good or welch,—which is it to be?*

JUDGE. I don't think that Mrs. Newman——

HORIGAN. Oh, damn Mrs. Newman!

JUDGE. Just as you say! That is—I—I don't think I *know* what to tell Mr. Bennett.

HORIGAN. Yes you do—you can offer him the nomination for Governor when his term of Mayor has expired and if you land him ask anything reasonable and you'll have it.

JUDGE. If there should be a vacancy in the Supreme Court?

HORIGAN. (L. C.) Any influence I have is yours.

WAINWRIGHT. (R.) Same here.

JUDGE. (L.) Then I feel sure I could get it and if I did, it would please Mrs. Newman so much.

HORIGAN. (*Grimly, but playing for laugh*) On the level, Judge—are you the *father* or the *mother* of your children?

JUDGE. (L.) Why—Mr. Horigan——

HORIGAN. Don't bring Mrs. Newman into this again. You say she's happy in the ball-room—leave her there!

JUDGE. If you only knew Mrs. Newman you wouldn't—

HORIGAN. Well, I don't know her, and I don't want to! And now let's get back to business. See Bennett to-night.

JUDGE. Very well. I will. I'll watch for a good opportunity and will make the matter as clear to him as I possibly can. Anything else?

HORIGAN. That's all.

JUDGE. I'll look for him at once. (*Up-stage c.*)

HORIGAN. And Judge—

JUDGE. Yes. (*Stops and returns to HORIGAN c.*)

HORIGAN. Give my regards to Mrs. Newman. (*JUDGE smiles and opens his mouth as if to speak*) To-morrow—! (*The JUDGE's expression changes and he exits c. to r.*) What I'd like to know is—does he love her or is he afraid of her?

WAINWRIGHT. What's that other line you said you had out for Bennett. (*r. c.*)

HORIGAN. (*c.*) It's a little idea of my own. I'm expecting a report to be finished to-night. If it is, it's to be sent here. If it turns out the way I think it will—I'll land him anyhow.

(*ROBERTS enters r.*)

WAINWRIGHT. (*Genially*) Good-evening, Mr. Roberts.

ROBERT. Good-evening!

WAINWRIGHT. (*To HORIGAN*) I think we have finished. I'll see you later. (*Up c. To ROBERTS*) Good-bye, Alderman! (*With a bow to ROBERTS, exits c. to l.*)

ROBERTS. Is this wise? (*Crosses to HORIGAN, r. c.*)

HORIGAN. Why not? It's no crime to be seen talking to me. (*c.*)

ROBERTS. (*r. c.*) To-morrow.

HORIGAN. No—now! For ten years or more the

Aldermen sent from your ward have been trying to get through a Brookville Park bill, but they've never been able.

ROBERTS. No.

HORIGAN. It would mean a big public improvement right in the heart of your ward and one that your voters want. If you could get the bill through it would be quite a feather in your cap, wouldn't it?

ROBERTS. Yes.

HORIGAN. Well, introduce it and it'll go through.

ROBERTS. Thank you.

HORIGAN. Of course you'll introduce it *after* the Borough Franchise is *passed*.

{*There is a pause. PHELAN is unseen—appears c. He looks in for a second then disappears R. to L.*}

ROBERTS. I—I voted against the bill before——

HORIGAN. Yes, but this is an amended bill with all the discrepancies taken out. Besides, the street-car line doesn't touch *your* ward. The park does and stays there. See! The fact that a mutual friend has taken up your notes at the Sturtevant Trust Company and has sent them to you, saving your business for you, won't cut any figure at all.

ROBERTS. I—I am an honest man. (*Moves a little to R.*)

HORIGAN. (*Goes a little R.*) Of course! You think the bill as amended is all right but seeing a change to get something your constituents want, you get it for them. That's honesty combined with business.

ROBERTS. Yes.

HORIGAN. Then there you are. (*There is a pause*)

ROBERTS. How—am I sure—that the notes——?

HORIGAN. Wainwright controls the Sturtevant Trust—I'll deliver them to-morrow. (*Short pause*)

Shall I? (*There is another pause, then* ROBERTS *nods*) You get the notes to-morrow and everything is understood.

ROBERTS. Yes.

HORIGAN. Good-night. (*Exits c. to L.*)

(WILLIAMS *meets* HORIGAN *c. with package of paper—exits c. There is a short pause; ROBERTS pulls himself together and walks towards exit R. PHELAN enters R.*)

PHELAN. What do you think of the party?

ROBERTS. Why—splendid—(*Starts as if to go R.*)

PHELAN. What's the hurry?

ROBERTS. Nothing in particular.

PHELAN. Then wait a minute—I'm lonesome. (*Takes ROBERTS, crosses L. c.*)

ROBERTS. (*c.*) Oh, very well.

(BENNETT *enters c. from R.*)

BENNETT. What is this—a little social gathering? (*L. c.*)

PHELAN. (*R.*) Yes. But *you* can get in. (*To ROBERTS*) Can't he?

ROBERTS. Certainly.

BENNETT. Thanks. No one knows how I wish Friday was over. You haven't changed front on the Franchise bill, of course.

ROBERTS. The—the alterations—that have been made in it——

BENNETT. Well?

ROBERTS. I haven't considered them carefully yet——

BENNETT. They are such that no honest man will reverse his opinion for them, and so I count on you to be with us. May I?

ROBERTS. When I have looked the bill over——

BENNETT. You'll have to do it soon. When *will* you do it and let me know?

ROBERTS. I object to being catechised by you, Mr. Bennett, I am my own master and I shall do as I please.

BENNETT. You can't dodge the issue in that way.

PHELAN. That's right. It's no use four-flushin' any longer.

ROBERTS. Anyway, I'm not answerable to you—
(*Crosses to L.*) I'm answerable to my constituents.

BENNETT. And I'll see that they call on you for an answer.

ROBERTS. Well, any time they do I'll be ready.
(*Exits to L.*)

PHELAN. (*Going to BENNETT*) Now what?

BENNETT. I'll look after him. (*C.*)

PHELAN. Same plan you've used against Horigan's men?

BENNETT. Yes.

(JUDGE *enters* R. C.)

JUDGE. (*To BENNETT*) I thought I saw you strolling this way. (*Down R. C.*)

BENNETT. (*L. C.*) Did you wish to *see* me, Judge

JUDGE. Oh, nothing important——

PHELAN. (*To BENNETT*) So long.

JUDGE. Don't let *me* drive you away, Mr. Phelan.

PHELAN. Judge—when the umpire's called *three strikes on me*, nobody has to *tell* me to *get away* from the *plate*. (*Exits to R.*)

BENNETT. Well, Judge? (*Sits*)

JUDGE. You—er—you won't misunderstand me—will you?

BENNETT. (*L. C.*) I hope not.

JUDGE. (*C.*) Don't you think you have fought the Borough Franchise hard enough?

BENNETT. No, I am against perpetual franchises on principle.

JUDGE. The gentlemen from whom I come represent the two most powerful interests which are factors in your career—money and organized politics.

BENNETT. Yes?

JUDGE. Money and organized politics.

BENNETT. Which as usual are working shoulder to shoulder! In other words you come from Horigan and Mr. Wainwright.

JUDGE. Yes! Take the advice of a man much older than yourself and who has seen many promising careers blighted by one foolish step. Do not antagonize the interests I have mentioned. The public forgets—*money and politics never do*.

BENNETT. I do not take my position to please them or the public. I do it for my own purpose and to please myself.

JUDGE. If you will do as they desire—if you remain neutral—I am authorized to offer you——

BENNETT. Yes?

JUDGE. The nomination for Governor when your term has expired.

BENNETT. So that's the bribe—(*Rises and moves to JUDGE R. C.*) is it, and you are the man selected as the go-between?

JUDGE. (*R.—indignantly*) Bribe! Go-between! What do you mean, sir?

BENNETT. *Aren't* you trying to bribe me?

JUDGE. No, Sir.

BENNETT. Then what *are* you trying to do?

JUDGE. I merely came to you with a proposition.

BENNETT. Didn't you offer me the nomination for Governor in return for a betrayal of trust! If that isn't bribery, what is it? (*Busi. There is a short pause*) Come! What is it?

JUDGE. It's—it's——

BENNETT. (*Crossing to R.*) Mr. Newman—I

am not surprised that *they* should *make* it but I *am* surprised that *you* should bring it. You! A Judge!! A Judge!! God help justice while money and politics can control the judges!

JUDGE. Er—I never was so insulted in my life. (*Drops down L.*) If Mrs. Newman were to hear of this—I

BENNETT. Take my advice and don't let her.

JUDGE. (*Returns back to BENNETT R.*) Whether Mrs. Newman hears of it or not, Mr. Wainwright shall—and at once sir—at once—(*Going*) Bribery sir! The idea! The idea! (*Exits R.*)

(*There is a short pause. HORGAN looks in, then enters C. from R. unseen by BENNETT down R. C.*)

HORGAN. (*R. C.*) *I've got you this time.* Do you hear? I've got you.

BENNETT. Really! (*R.*)

HORGAN. Yes, really! When it came to a fight between you and me I looked your record over but there was nothing I could use. Then I thought of your father——

BENNETT. My father!

HORGAN. Yes. What would you say if I told you he was one of us—that he was a grafter too?

BENNETT. (*Going to HORGAN*) I should say you lied.

HORGAN. Well, I *do* tell you! He was one of us. And I don't lie.

BENNETT. You'll have to do better than that. (*Turns away a little L.*)

HORGAN. You don't believe it, eh?

BENNETT. Of course I don't. What do you think I am?

HORGAN. And what do you think I am—a fool? (*Going to BENNETT*) Do you imagine I'd come to

you with such a story at *this* stage of the game unless I had the proofs?

BENNETT. Proofs? You say you have proofs? (*Turns and faces HORIGAN*)

HORIGAN. Oh, that touches you, doesn't it?

BENNETT. I don't believe you.

HORIGAN. But you soon will. When I thought of your father I remembered he made his money pretty fast—(*Crosses L. C. to R. of table*) that he belonged to the organization, and that he built the library and the aqueduct. *And then I had an idea!*

BENNETT. Well? (*Crosses to C.*)

HORIGAN. I had the specifications for both buildings dug out and I sent for Morris and Cherrington, the engineers. You've heard of them?

BENNETT. Yes.

HORIGAN. Then you know they're the best in the land—that they're not our people—and that they can't be bought. Don't you?

BENNETT. Yes.

HORIGAN. I hired them to examine the buildings and to see whether or not they were up to specification. I told them that I wanted no theories—that I wanted *the facts*. Well, I got them. Here's their report. *The facts are here.* (*Produces the report*)

BENNETT. Well?

HORIGAN. The report shows they were two of the crookedest jobs ever done—inferior materials, when the materials called for were used at all—instead of solid granite—granite casings with lime and mortar between; iron beams instead of steel; concrete foundations less than half the required depth; common tiles instead of fireproof; in fact, such coarse and rotten work that if it was tried to-day it would be exposed before morning. Talk about grafters! Your father with his gang was the king of them; that's what he was, *the King* of the grafters.

(During the above speech, despite his efforts at control, HORIZAN'S voice has gradually risen.)

BENNETT. Ssh! Ssh! Ssh!

HORIZAN. I don't care who hears. (*Going to table L. and throking copy of report on it*) There's a copy of the report. Look it over. (*Turns up-stage*) And now listen to me. If the Borough Franchise Bill passes Friday night that report will be buried forever. If it's beat, every paper in America will have it the next morning. That's all I've got to say. (*Goes to exit*) You're in a *fine* position to talk about grafters, you are!

(HORIZAN *exits* R. C. BENNETT *stands immovable for a time, then slowly picks up report L.; sits on chair. He reads it.*)

BENNETT. (*To himself*) It's true. It's true.

(MRS. BENNETT *enters* L.)

MRS. BENNETT. Alwyn, I'm rather tired, dear. (*Speaks off*) Very well, good-night. You needn't come, but if you don't mind I think I'll go home.

(*Instinctively* BENNETT *tries to hide the report. Rises.*)

BENNETT. Certainly.

MRS. BENNETT. What is that?

BENNETT. What?

MRS. BENNETT. That paper—in your hand.

BENNETT. (L. C.) Oh, it's only a report.

MRS. BENNETT. (L.) So you're not free from business even here. It's a shame. A man ought never to take his business outside his office. Your father never did. (*With a sigh*) Oh, dear, what a man he was! And you are like him. You are his

son. (*There is a pause.* BENNETT, *greatly troubled and still undecided, again looks at his mother. She turns and catches the glance*) Alwyn, why do you look at me like that?

BENNETT. I—I—I—was trying to decide something.

MRS. BENNETT. What?

BENNETT. I was trying to decide—whether it is better to do what is right, knowing it will bring unhappiness to those you love, or to let the right go by default, and leave their happiness with them.

MRS. BENNETT. There can be no question of that, dear. *Right is right*, no matter *what* happens.

BENNETT. I'm not sure.

MRS. BENNETT. What is troubling you? (*Sits L. of table*) There have never been secrets between us, my boy. Tell me.

BENNETT. It's about a friend of mine. He wishes me to advise him.

MRS. BENNETT. Yes, dear.

BENNETT. (*Sits R. of table*) He occupies an important position of trust. A man wishes him to betray those who placed him there, and threatens, if he declines, to publish some facts which would prove his father, who is dead, to have been dishonest. What should my friends do?

MRS. BENNETT. It is a hard problem, dear—but there is only one answer. He must be faithful to his trust.

BENNETT. That is what you advise me to tell him.

MRS. BENNETT. Yes.

BENNETT. I will. (*Rises, crosses to R.*)

MRS. BENNETT. (*Rises and crosses to C.*) Oh, Alwyn, we should both of us thank God every day that I was blessed with such a *husband*, and *you* with such a father. (*There is a pause*)

BENNETT. (*R.*) Yes, but suppose—just suppose—that it *had* been father.

MRS. BENNETT. (C.) I decline to suppose anything of the kind. (*There is a pause*) Why do you ask me to suppose such a thing?

BENNETT. For no reason, mother. (*Trying to turn the subject*) Shall we go?

MRS. BENNETT. (*Getting vaguely alarmed*) Wait, Alwyn! There is something about your question that I don't like.

BENNETT. You imagine it.

MRS. BENNETT. There—is—something vague, and shadowy. I know it's nothing real—and yet, it frightens me.

BENNETT. Please.

MRS. BENNETT. The mention of your father has made me understand more clearly what it means to them. No wonder you hesitated. (*With a sudden thought*) And—Alwyn!

BENNETT. Mother.

MRS. BENNETT. (C.) Why did you look at me as you did?

BENNETT. (R.) For *no* reason.

MRS. BENNETT. But there was a reason. Tell me the truth now, Alwyn—tell me the truth—has anyone spoken against—*your father*? (*There is a pause. In BENNETT'S silence his mother reads his answer*) What did they say?

BENNETT. He said—father did not get—his money—honestly.

MRS. BENNETT. And you—what did you do—you *told him—he lied*——

BENNETT. Yes. I told him—he lied.

MRS. BENNETT. And then——

BENNETT. Then—he proved—he spoke the truth.

MRS. BENNETT. Alwyn!

BENNETT. He proved it—he proved it!

MRS. BENNETT. He proved that your father—I won't say it. It's a lie! It's a lie!

BENNETT. It is the truth, mother.

MRS. BENNETT. Your father, dishon—Alwyn!

(*Moves to L. of BENNETT*) My boy! Tell me it isn't true. He deceived you, didn't he? He deceived you.

BENNETT. Do you think anyone could deceive me in this, and do you think I would have told you if I were not sure—absolutely sure——

MRS. BENNETT. Your father! Your father! (MRS. BENNETT *breaks down and weeps bitterly. BENNETT comforts her. She regains control over herself*) What is it?

BENNETT. The library—and the aqueduct! Horgan discovered it. He threatens to expose it unless I allow the Borough Franchise to pass.

MRS. BENNETT. And if you let it pass——

BENNETT. He will say nothing—that is what I was trying to decide.

MRS. BENNETT. Right is right—no matter what happens.

BENNETT. Then you think I should——!

MRS. BENNETT. Do what is right, my boy, do what is right! (*Arms around BENNETT*)

BENNETT. I will! I will!

MRS. BENNETT. And now take me to the carriage, please.

BENNETT. I'll go home with you. (*Moves R. towards exit R.*)

MRS. BENNETT. No. Your place is here.

BENNETT. Very well. (*They go toward exit R.*)

MRS. BENNETT. My boy!

BENNETT. It's you, I'm thinking of.

(MRS. BENNETT and BENNETT *exeunt to R.* PERRY *enters L., turns up C.*)

PERRY. Alwyn! Alwyn! (PHELAN *enters C. To PHELAN*) Seen his Honor?

PHELAN. Not lately. (*Down C.*)

PERRY. (L. C.) I had something to tell him.

PHELAN. (C.) Won't I do? ✓

PERRY. Hardly. I'll tell you this, though. I'm the happiest chap! (*Shakes hands with PHELAN*)

PHELAN. Money?

PERRY. No.

PHELAN. Girl?

PERRY. How did you guess?

PHELAN. Always one or the other at your age.

PERRY. (*Going to exit L.*) She only let me off when I came to tell Alwyn. (*At exit*) Gee! But I'm happy. (*Exits L.*)

PHELAN. (c.) I used to be like that.

(*Enter THOMPSON, c.*)

THOMPSON. I beg your pardon, I was looking for Mr. Wainwright, Mr. Phelan. (*Going to as if to exit R.*)

PHELAN. Were you, Mr. Garrison.

(*THOMPSON gives an almost imperceptible start, then quickly pulls himself.*)

THOMPSON. You've forgotten my name. It is Thompson. (*Moves to PHELAN R. c.*)

PHELAN. (c.) Perhaps it is now, but the first time we met it was Garrison.

THOMPSON. (R. c.) Absurd. I never saw you till the other day.

PHELAN. Oh, yes, you did. Shall I tell when it was? It was the day your father shot himself.

THOMPSON. My father did *not* shoot himself, and my name is Thompson—not Garrison.

PHELAN. That's right. When you start a bluff, play the hand through.

THOMPSON. I don't understand you.

PHELAN. Yes, you do. And don't overlook this, my boy, I'm your friend.

(*CYNTHIA and PERRY enter L.*)

PERRY. Isn't it great to be engaged?

CYNTHIA. Isn't it?

PERRY. Oh! pshaw! we can't be alone anywhere.

CYNTHIA. It's a shame! Oh, I've lost my fan.

PERRY. I'll get it for you, and when I come back, I'll find a place where we can be alone.

(PERRY *exits* L. CYNTHIA *looks after him*.)

PHELAN. (C.) Do you know who that is?

THOMPSON. (R. C.) Yes.

PHELAN. (C.) And you still deny that you're Garrison?

THOMPSON. Yes.

PHELAN. Miss Garrison.

CYNTHIA. What is it, Mr. Phelan?

PHELAN. Here's somebody I want you to know.

(CYNTHIA *goes toward* PHELAN.)

CYNTHIA. Yes. (*There is a pause*)

PHELAN. Haven't you ever seen him before?

CYNTHIA. I think not.

THOMPSON. There. You see.

PHELAN. Think again—someone you knew years ago. (THOMPSON *tries to avert his face*. To THOMPSON) Turn round and let her look at you. (THOMPSON *looks squarely at* CYNTHIA) Haven't you seen him before?

CYNTHIA. Yes, I think—I think I have. (*There is a pause*) It's Henry! It's Henry! (*Going to* THOMPSON R. C.)

PHELAN. (*Going a little* L.) Your brother!

CYNTHIA. Yes, my brother. (*She crosses to* THOMPSON) You remember me, don't you—?

THOMPSON. (R.) No. No. Miss Garrison, I do not remember you, you are mistaken. I am not your brother.

PHELAN. (L. C.) She's your sister, and you

know it. Man alive, how can you deny your flesh and blood like that.

CYNTHIA. (R. C.) You do remember me. You must! I have never ceased to think of you. I didn't know you at first, because I was only a little girl when—! And you've changed. But I knew you were alive and that you thought of me and every night I've prayed that you might come back to me. Don't deny me any longer. You are all I have in the world. I've no father, no mother, no one but you.

THOMPSON. Cynthia! (*They embrace*)

PHELAN. (C.) I knew I was right.

THOMPSON. Yes. But you don't know what you have done.

PHELAN. Oh, yes, I do. There was a reason for his not coming to you. There's still a reason. You mustn't tell a soul.

CYNTHIA. (R. C.) Not tell them that he's my brother.

THOMPSON. No one! Promise me! Promise me!

CYNTHIA. Alderman——

(PHELAN *nods.*)

PHELAN. It won't be for long. (*Turns up C.*)

THOMPSON. Promise me. You must!

CYNTHIA. Very well, I promise.

(THOMPSON *holds out his arms.* CYNTHIA *goes to him. He embraces her.* PERRY *re-enters with fan, L.*)

PERRY. I found it. (*Music—Waltz pp.* PERRY *sees the embrace, and pauses amazed. Starts to fan himself, then drops fan*) If this is a dream won't somebody please wake me up.

CYNTHIA. (*Going to C.*) I can explain it very

easily. When you left me I was sitting over there, wasn't I?

PERRY. (L.) You were—but you got up and proceeded to get busy.

CYNTHIA. (C.) Yes. I got up because Mr. Phelan asked me. He wanted me to meet my—my—(PHELAN *places his hand on her arm warningly*. There is a pause. L. C.) That is—he wanted me to—to—(Points to seat *had sat on*) I was sitting over there, that's all I can tell you. (Going up L. a little)

PERRY. (L.) It is very lucid undoubtedly, but I don't quite grasp it.

PHELAN. You don't, eh? Then I'll explain it to you. (Crosses to PERRY)

PERRY. (L.) Ah! Now we will hear from Mr. Fixit.

PHELAN. Oh, go to the devil! (Moves L.)

PERRY. (Crosses to THOMPSON) Haven't you anything to say?

THOMPSON. No!

PERRY. (R.) Well, you *will* have something to say. What right have you to kiss the girl that I am engaged to.

PHELAN. Engaged!

THOMPSON. You're engaged to *her*?

PERRY. Yes. That is—I *was* engaged. Gee! But can't things happen quickly. Less than ten minutes ago she told me—and I told her—and we told each other—! Well, life will never be the same to me again. Good-bye. (Starts toward exit L.)

CYNTHIA. Perry.

PHELAN. (L. C.) Stop! Stop! (PERRY *stops*) Come here! (Pause) Come here. (PERRY *comes back*. Indicating CYNTHIA) Look at her. (To CYNTHIA) Lift up your face and look him in the eye like the girl you are. (CYNTHIA *looks at* PERRY. To PERRY) What do you see there. Is

there anything but the real thing and goodness, is there?

PERRY. (L.) Of course there isn't! But I saw it. Don't forget *that*. I saw it.

PHELAN. She couldn't do anything to be ashamed of, and you know it. If you don't know it, you don't know it, you don't love her. If you do love her you'll trust her. It's up to you.

PERRY. Why doesn't she explain.

PHELAN. Do you trust her? That's the question and the happiness of both of you is at stake.

(*There is a pause. PERRY smiles slowly, then opens his arms.*)

PERRY. Of course I trust her. I'd trust her with my life! But you will explain, won't you?

CYNTHIA. (L. c.) Yes. Some day.

PHELAN. (C.) Of course she'll explain.

THOMPSON. (R.) Cynthia!

CYNTHIA. Yes.

THOMPSON. Tell him.

CYNTHIA. May I?

THOMPSON. Yes. But he's to say nothing without my permission.

PHELAN. You'll agree to that, won't you?

PERRY. Of course I will.

PHELAN. And now be off with you.

PERRY. Alderman, will come to the wedding?

PHELAN. Yes, and I'll kiss the bride too.

PERRY. See her blush!

CYNTHIA. Oh, Perry!

PERRY. I'm just crazy about you. (PERRY laughs. *They exeunt L. There is a pause*)

PHELAN. I used to be like that. I had a girl too. While everything was all right I was living in heaven, but when she threw me down my address was 23 Lemon St. (PHELAN goes to THOMPSON

and shakes his hand) Young fellow, I want to shake you by the hand. You're grit clean through.

(JUDGE *enters* C. *from* R.)

JUDGE. (*Down* C.) I beg your pardon, Alderman, but have you seen Mr. Wainwright?

PHELAN. Not lately. (*To* THOMPSON) And now come along, I want to introduce you to the Mayor. (*They exit* R.)

(DALLAS *laughs off* L. *She enters with* GIBBS *talking*.)

JUDGE. Excuse me, but have you seen Mr. Wainwright?

GIBBS. Not for sometime, but I don't think he can be far away.

JUDGE. Perhaps he's gone.

DALLAS. Uncle wouldn't mention it to me and I am sure he wouldn't go without letting me know. (*Crosses* R. *Enter* WAINWRIGHT C. *and* L. *Music stops*) Here's Mr. Wainwright now.

WAINWRIGHT. They told me you was looking for me, Judge. What is it?

JUDGE. I have just been grossly insulted.

DALLAS. Insulted?

JUDGE. Yes.

GIBBS. By whom.

JUDGE. Mr. Bennett.

DALLAS. You must be mistaken, Judge. (*Sits* R.)

WAINWRIGHT. Of course you'd say that. If you can be on friendly terms with Bennett after what he said about me you must think he can't insult any man. I sent to ask him to be friends—to let the past be forgotten. Judge I apologize for the indignity I caused you—I should have known better. (*Crosses to* JUDGE R.)

THE MAN OF THE HOUR. 101

JUDGE. That's all right, Charles. And anything I can do for you, you have only to call upon me.

WAINWRIGHT. Thanks.

(JUDGE *exits* R.)

DALLAS. So Mr. Bennett refused your offer of friendship?

WAINWRIGHT. Yes. (*Crosses, comes to c.*)

DALLAS. Then he must have had a reason for it.

WAINWRIGHT. He had. You are the reason.

DALLAS. I am.

WAINWRIGHT. You! It is no secret that he wishes to *marry* you. Neither is it a secret that Mr. Gibbs wishes to marry you.

DALLAS. Well? (R. C.)

WAINWRIGHT. Gibbs is interested with me and interested heavily. If Bennett defeats the bill again it means that practically all Gibbs has will be lost. If that occurs, he must, as an honest man, drop out of the running, leaving the field clear for Bennett. The scheme has been known to us for some time.

DALLAS. (*Rises*) I don't believe it.

WAINWRIGHT. To gain his point, he not only planned to ruin Gibbs but he is willing to beggar Perry and yourself as well.

DALLAS. To beggar Perry and me! (*Rises*)

WAINWRIGHT. (C.) Yes. Thinking that Borough Stock was a safe and profitable purchase I sold out the investments I was holding for you and put everything in the borough company.

DALLAS. Then—if Mr. Bennett succeeds—Perry and I will be dependent on *you*? It doesn't seem possible, and yet he—(*Going to GIBBS—to him* L.) he *did* know about you, didn't he?

(WAINWRIGHT *crosses* R.)

GIBBS. (L.) It isn't myself, it's *you* I care about.

I can't tell you *how* I feel when I think of that man doing his best to ruin you and realize that *I* am the cause of it.

DALLAS. But, Mr. Gibbs—!

GIBBS. We haven't lost yet though and we'll fight—fight to the end. Yes and we'll win—we've *got* to win—to *save* you.

DALLAS. To save me from Mr. Bennett.

(BENNETT *enters.*)

WAINWRIGHT. That's the idea exactly. (*Going a little R.*)

BENNETT. (*Enters c.*) My dance, I think. (*Down c. Music, march pp.*)

DALLAS. Just a minute—please. (L. c.) You know of course that Mr. Gibbs is interested deeply in the Borough Street Railway franchise. I heard him tell you so.

BENNETT. (c.) Please don't talk about such matters now.

DALLAS. (L. c.) I must. You know it, don't you?

BENNETT. Yes.

DALLAS. (L. c.) But do you know that Perry—to say nothing of myself—is heavily involved too? Do you know that—if you succeed—all the money that we have—will be lost—and that we shall be dependent—on Mr. Wainwright?

BENNETT. Dallas!

DALLAS. Do you know it? (*There is a short pause*)

BENNETT. Yes, I know it.

DALLAS. And knowing it means ruin for us. You still intend to oppose the bill?

BENNETT. (c.) I must.

DALLAS. Why?

BENNETT. It is my *duty* to oppose it.

GIBBS. (L.) Duty?

WAINWRIGHT. (R. C.) Duty! That's a fine excuse. Was it your "duty" that made you sell stock short, the day after you vetoed the bill.

BENNETT. I did *not* sell the stock short. (C.)

WAINWRIGHT. Openly—no! You hadn't the *courage* to do *that*, so you selected her brother as the stool-pigeon and sold it through *him*.

DALLAS. He speculated in Borough stock.

WAINWRIGHT. He did and used your brother as the cat's paw. Perry's actions made me suspicious and I had him watched. The result is that I have positive proof that he advanced Perry the money to sell the stock short. *Now can you see why he fights the bill.*

DALLAS. (L. C.) If he defeats it—?

WAINWRIGHT. *He makes money!* That is another reason why he is trying to defeat it!

DALLAS. This isn't true. It can't be true, Alwyn. (*There is a pause*) Deny it, Alwyn. Deny it.

WAINWRIGHT. (R.) He can't! It is true!

DALLAS. (L. C.) And if it is—you can explain, can't you?

BENNETT. (C.) No.

WAINWRIGHT. There you see——

GIBBS. (L.) And *he* talks of "duty."

DALLAS. (L. C.) Alwyn. *Did* you do as he says?

BENNETT. Yes.

DALLAS. And can give no explanation.

BENNETT. (C.) None.

WAINWRIGHT. (R.) What do you think of your ideal now?

DALLAS. (L. C.) Think of him. I haven't the words to express *what* I think of him. I thought I knew him, I find I do not. I thought I understood him, I find I have been mistaken. I thought him a man of honor, instead I find a man who uses his public office for his private gain! Mr. Gibbs, you have waited for your answer long enough. Any time you desire it now it will be ready.

GIBBS. Dear.

BENNETT. You mean——

DALLAS. You know what I mean and you understand.

BENNETT. Dallas.

DALLAS. Your arm please. (DALLAS and GIBBS *exeunt* L.)

WAINWRIGHT. That fixes that little matter all right. Whatever happens now you loose her.

BENNETT. At least I shall retain my self respect. I love your niece, you know it. She means more to me than the office of Mayor, Governor, President or anything in the world.

WAINWRIGHT. No one knows of this except us four. I haven't even told Horigan. There is an easy way to win her—why not take it?

BENNETT. Because I'll win her the right way or not at all. I won't purchase her at a price. I'd give my life to have her come to me fairly and honestly, but I won't graft even for her.

CURTAIN.

ACT IV.

SCENE:—*The scene is a divided stage set as in diagram below.*

It shows two rooms in the City Hall with a door between them. In each room is an oblong table, C. on which are pens, ink and paper. There is a chair R. L. C. and another R. L. C. of each table, and there are also two comfortable office chairs in each room, as well as a telephone. The room R. is used by HORIGAN as his office on the important occasions when he considers his presence necessary at the City Hall. When the

curtain rises HORIGAN, WAINWRIGHT and GIBBS are discovered in the room. There is about them an air of tension and excitement. GIBBS is palpably nervous, WAINWRIGHT shows suppressed anxiety and HORIGAN is carrying matters with an air of steadiness and coolness which he is far from feeling. WAINWRIGHT is sitting L. GIBBS C. up. HORIGAN is sitting R.)

WAINWRIGHT. (L. of table) How long do you think it will before they take up *our* bill?

HORIGAN. (R. of table) About half an hour, I should say.

GIBBS. (C. of table) And if Ellis or Roberts should not come before then we shall——!

HORIGAN. Don't worry they'll come.

GIBBS. Perhaps one of them is here now.

HORIGAN. No. If there was, Williams would have reported.

GIBBS. Then he knows where you are?

HORIGAN. Sure. When the deal's important enough to bring me over here anybody who has business with me knows he can find me in this room.

WAINWRIGHT. And a very convenient room it is too.

GIBBS. Why?

WAINWRIGHT. Because there's only that door. (*Indicating the door R.*) *between* it and one of the ante-rooms to the Council Chamber.

GIBBS. I see.

HORIGAN. This office and the two next that way, (*Indicating the room L.*) belonged to the Comptroller, but when he moved his office upstairs they were turned into the so-called Committee rooms. They're practically never used and now it's understood that when I'm on the ground this one belongs to me.

GIBBS. Good idea.

(HORIGAN takes out a cigar-case and offers it to WAINWRIGHT.)

HORIGAN. Have a cigar.

WAINWRIGHT. No thanks.

HORIGAN. (To GIBBS) Gibbs.

GIBBS. Thank you.

(GIBBS takes a cigar, puts it between his teeth, but does not light it. Instead he chews on it nervously. HORIGAN offers case to WAINWRIGHT. HORIGAN replaces cigar case in his pocket. WILLIAMS enters R. from Council Chamber.)

WILLIAMS. Ellis has come——

HORIGAN. Good.

GIBBS. Now all we need is Roberts.

HORIGAN. That's all.

HORIGAN. There's an awful mob in there. (*Indicating council chamber*) The gallery is packed.

WAINWRIGHT. How are they behaving?

HORIGAN. All right so far; if they make any trouble, put through a motion to have the gallery cleared. We may have to call in the police, if we do, we'll call 'em in. (*Ready phone. WILLIAMS exits R. HORIGAN goes to the phone*) Give me 900 F. (*Short pause*) Is this the Station House? Hello. Is the captain there! Tell him Mr. Horigan wants to talk to him. Yes, Mr. Horigan! (*Short pause*) Yes, this is Horigan. That you, Captain? I'm at the City Hall. There's a mob in the Aldermanic Chamber and it may be necessary to clear 'em out. Send up a squad of the boys right away. Tell them to bring their night sticks with them, take no back talk and not to be afraid to use them. Yes, I'll stand behind 'em for anything they do. Right away remember. Good-bye. (*HORIGAN replaces phone. Goes down R.*) I'll show them people

they're not up against a kindergarten. (*There is a pause*)

(PAYNE enters committee room from entrance c. He comes in briskly, sits at table, and writes quickly.)

WAINWRIGHT. I hope it won't be necessary to use force——

HORIGAN. Why?

WAINWRIGHT. I prefer diplomacy.

HORIGAN. That's something I don't understand.

GIBBS. They are the voters, you know.

HORIGAN. Yes. *They vote but we count.* (*Telephone bell rings. HORIGAN goes to telephone*) Yes, this is Mr. Horigan. Who? Alderman Roberts.

GIBBS. (*Quickly*) Roberts—he isn't coming!

HORIGAN. (*Savagely*) Oh, shut up. (*At telephone*) No! Not you Roberts!—I said "not you." (*Both WAINWRIGHT and GIBBS are deeply interested, GIBBS intensely so and showing it plainly. He chews nervous on his cigar*) Yes, this is Horigan. What do you want to see me for? (*Pause*) No. It's all settled. (*Short pause*) It is I tell you. (*Another pause*) Well, if you must see me come to my room at the City Hall. (*Short pause*) No, I won't come to see you.

GIBBS. (*Nervously*) Perhaps you'd better.

HORIGAN. I'll be waiting for you. You know my room. (*Short pause*) Then don't come that way! Come through the two committee rooms and knock on my door twice—(*Short pause*) understand, I'll be waiting—yes alone—and see that you come—for if you don't—look out for yourself—(*HORIGAN replaces phone—goes down R.*)

GIBBS. Will he come?

HORIGAN. Yes.

GIBBS. How soon? (*Goes to HORIGAN*)

HORIGAN. Says he'll be here in fifteen minutes.

GIBBS. But if he isn't?

HORIGAN. (*Playing for laugh*) What are you—the human interrogation point! If he isn't, he won't be—but he will!

WAINWRIGHT. (*Sitting L. of table. Indicating GIBBS*) He's nervous to-night.

HORIGAN. I should say he is. Look at that cigar. (*They look at the cigar which GIBBS has been chewing*) Have another. And smoke this one—don't try to make a meal of it.

(WAINWRIGHT rises and crosses to HORIGAN. HORIGAN hands a fresh cigar to GIBBS. DALLAS and PERRY appear at door C. leading to Committee Room. PAYNE sits L. of table.)

PERRY. (*To DALLAS*) I'll ask him.

DALLAS. Do.

(*They enter the room.*)

PERRY. (*Crosses down R. DALLAS above table C.*) I beg your pardon, but can you tell me where the meeting of the aldermen is, to-night?

PAYNE. (*Briskly without looking up*) At the end of the hall. (*Indicating R.*)

PERRY. Thank you. (*PERRY and DALLAS start to exeunt C.*)

PAYNE. Not much use your going—biggest crowd ever in there and talk about being hot—it's so hot that compared to it—(*PAYNE looks up and sees DALLAS*) I beg your pardon. (*Rises*)

PERRY. A big crowd is there.

PAYNE. Enormous.

DALLAS. (*Going to PERRY*) Then there's no chance of our getting seats.

PAYNE. I may be able to get one. I'm a newspaper man. May I try?

DALLAS. But the trouble?

PAYNE. (*Starting to go*) None at all. I assure you.

DALLAS. You're very kind.

PERRY. Will it be all right for us to wait here?

PAYNE. Certainly. Nominally this is a committee room, really it's nothing of the sort. We often work in here. PAYNE *exits c. to r.* DALLAS *goes up c. then down l.* PERRY *goes down r.*)

GIBBS. I'm going where I can walk about. (*Exits r.*)

HORIGAN. I thought you said Gibbs was game.

WAINWRIGHT. He is.

HORIGAN. No. He's a quitter, and there are two things I can't stand for, a traitor and a quitter. (*Rises and moves to front of desk, meets WAINWRIGHT c. Then turns up-stage, takes seat at back*)

PERRY. And now what? (*Going to DALLAS*)

DALLAS. (*L. c.*) I suppose I was foolish to come, but I couldn't help it. I had to know what was being done.

PERRY. You're upset. That's what's the matter with you. (*R. c.*)

DALLAS. (*Rises*) I'm more than upset. Since the night of the ball—I—I——

PERRY. The first days of the engagement are said to be the happiest, in peoples lives. It certainly hasn't been that way with you.

DALLAS. No, it hasn't.

PERRY. Poor old girl. (*PERRY places his arm about DALLAS*)

DALLAS. Don't. If you sympathize with me I—Oh, I don't know what I shall do.

(BENNETT and PHELAN enter c. from r.)

BENNETT. (*Speaking as he comes on*) I know I promised it but—! (*c. Sees DALLAS. There is a pause*) Good-evening.

(DALLAS bows.)

PHELAN. (L.) Evenin' Miss.

DALLAS. (*Faintly, down L.*) Alderman.

BENNETT. I merely wish to write a short note.
(*To PHELAN*) Perhaps it isn't necessary, anyway.

PHELAN. You *said* you'd *send* it. And though I *found* him he's doin' *business* with you.

BENNETT. Very well. (*To DALLAS*) Excuse me. (*BENNETT sits at table and writes C.*)

PHELAN. (*PHELAN comes down L. to DALLAS*) I read in the papers about your engagement.

DALLAS. Did you?

PHELAN. I'm sorry Mr. Gibbs is lined up against us in this Borough Franchise fight because we'll put him away sure. Why, our first blow will land on him so hard he won't know his own home without seein' his name on the door-plate.

(*BENNETT finishes writing and hands note to PHELAN.*)

BENNETT. Where shall I meet you?

PHELAN. This is as good a place as any unless—!
(*Looks at DALLAS and PERRY*)

PERRY. We shall go in a minutes or so——

PHELAN. Then what's the matter with this?

BENNETT. It suits me.

PHELAN. Then here it is. (*To DALLAS*) Evenin'! (*DALLAS bows. PHELAN exits C. to L. There is short pause*)

BENNETT. This is the first chance I have had to offer my felicitations. I hope you'll be very happy.

DALLAS. Thank you.

(*BENNETT starts toward exit C.*)

PERRY. (*Goes to BENNETT*) What's the hurry?

BENNETT. I might be needed.

PERRY. Why, is the big fight on?

BENNETT. Will be soon.

DALLAS. Of course you are going to fight to the end?

BENNETT. Certainly! Why *shouldn't* I?

DALLAS. Why *should* you?

BENNETT. Dallas—and this is probably the last time I shall call you by that name—I am not going to plead for a rehearing—the verdict was against me. And I accepted it as best I can. But some day I think you'll find you have made a mistake.

DALLAS. Perhaps.

BENNETT. I don't mean in preferring Gibbs to me—I mean that you have made a mistake somewhere in your *judgment* of me and I hope that some day you will find it out because I want to be set right in your eyes. That's all. Good-bye. (To PERRY) Good-night, Perry—

PERRY. Good-night, Alwyn. (BENNETT *exits through doors C. R. and across the hall*) He's a thoroughbred. (PERRY *comes down R. DALLAS comes down L.*)

DALLAS. I used to think that.

PERRY. Why have you changed your mind?

DALLAS. You know very well why I have changed it, but you don't seem to realize that if he succeeds to-night nearly all the money we have will be lost.

PERRY. Oh, yes, I do realize it. But fear not little sister, brother Perry will take care of you.

DALLAS. Can't you be serious?

PERRY. Not about this. What do I care for the vulgar money. (*Crosses U. R.*)

(PAYNE *enters R. crosses the hall quickly and enters room. PERRY turns up-stage R. DALLAS turns up L.*)

PAYNE. I was in great luck—got two seats on the lower floor. (c. *back of desk*)

DALLAS. It is very kind of you.

PAYNE. Not all. I've told the door-keeper. He'll send a man with you.

DALLAS. Thank you once more.

PAYNE. (c.) I don't know how long you'll be able to stand it. There's an awful crowd in there.

PERRY. We'll manage some way. Thank you very much. (PERRY and DALLAS *exceunt* c. to R. PAYNE *R. resumes his writing* c. of desk)

WAINWRIGHT. What about that other one you had out for Bennett?

HORIGAN. It hooked him all right.

WAINWRIGHT. Evidently you didn't land him.

HORIGAN. No.

WAINWRIGHT. Then if Roberts doesn't come?

HORIGAN. He will.

WAINWRIGHT. Was it wise to have him come here?

HORIGAN. I'll tell you. He wants to weaken. I don't want to let him and it improves my chances fifty per cent by having him come here. I've found by experience that it makes a heap of difference if the *other fellow* comes to see *you*, or if *you go* to see *him*.

WAINWRIGHT. When are you going to make public that story I told you about Bennett selling the stock——

HORIGAN. At what the story writers call "the psychological moment." It hasn't come yet, but it soon will.

(GIBBS *enters* R.)

GIBBS. (To WAINWRIGHT) I have a surprise for you.

(DALLAS and PERRY *enter* R.)

WAINWRIGHT. Dallas! (*Rises*)

GIBBS. I found her out there and persuaded her to *come to see you*.

(DALLAS *sees* HORIGAN.)

DALLAS. (*To* GIBBS) But you didn't tell me Uncle was alone.

GIBBS. Let me present Mr. Horigan. (*Introducing* HORIGAN *and indicating* DALLAS) Miss Wainwright! (*They bow—indicating* PERRY) Mr. Wainwright.

PERRY. How do you do!

(HORIGAN *bows*.)

WAINWRIGHT. What are you doing *here*?

PERRY. (*Going down R.*) I brought Dallas to see the fun.

DALLAS. No, I *made* him bring me.

WAINWRIGHT. Why?

DALLAS. My uncle's money's in the balance—so is—my fiance's—so is my brothers—so is my own I am interested more than anyone. Why should *I* be expected to stay quietly at home waiting for the news?

HORIGAN. There's the right spirit? (*To* GIBBS) I congratulate *you*. (*WILLIAMS enters R. hurriedly*)

WILLIAMS. What! The police have come.

DALLAS *and* PERRY. The police!

HORIGAN. (*To* DALLAS) That's all right. (*To* (*WILLIAMS*) Well, you know what to do. Afraid to take the responsibility. But you will.

DALLAS. *Why* have the police come?

HORIGAN. To clear the Gallery if necessary.

WAINWRIGHT. So you see, you can't go in there.

DALLAS. Why not? I'm not going in the gallery.

WAINWRIGHT. Anyway you can't go on the floor. You can sit in the ante-room and wait.

DALLAS. Sit and wait. Sit and wait—that's all you men think a woman is good for? I shall go in.

HORIGAN. (*To WILLIAMS*) Then see about a seat for Miss Wainwright.

PERRY. We have them.

HORIGAN. See that she gets one next to the ante-room so there'll be no trouble getting out. Have somebody moved if necessary.

PERRY. Yes, I'll fix it.

(*WILLIAMS exits R.*)

DALLAS. (*To HORIGAN*) You are very kind.

HORIGAN. Not at all. There isn't any danger. (*To PERRY*) There probably won't be the slightest disturbances but if there is, at first sign of it, see that she gets into that ante-room.

PERRY. I will.

HORIGAN. (*To DALLAS*) And remember this room is entirely at your disposal.

DALLAS. Thank you.

PERRY. Now let's be off. (*PERRY, DALLAS and GIBBS exeunt*)

HORIGAN. Gibbs.

GIBBS. Yes.

HORIGAN. Tell Williams to spring that story about Bennett's speculation. He'll know what to do.

GIBBS. Good. (*Exits*)

HORIGAN. (*Goes down R. and moves to front of desk*) The girl's all right. She has spirit. Two years after she's married to Gibbs they'll either quit or he'll be eating out of her hand! Personally I think they'll quit.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Going to L. C.*) Why?

HORIGAN. She'll find the yellow streak. Had it been Bennett—He may be a fool—but—he's a man! I thought you told me he was in love with her.

WAINWRIGHT. He was. And is still.

HORIGAN. Sure?

WAINWRIGHT. Yes. He's crazy over her.

HORIGAN. (*Reflectively*) Oh, is he?

(*The door L. leading into the room L. is opened cautiously and ROBERTS enters. He sees PAYNE, hesitates then starts to draw back but PAYNE's attention is attracted and he looks up and sees him.*)

PAYNE. Good-evening, Alderman.

ROBERTS. Good-evening.

PAYNE. There's a full attendance to-night. You're the last.

ROBERTS. I'm late, but I couldn't help it. (PAYNE *gathers up his paper preparatory to leaving*) Going?

PAYNE. Yes, I've just finished the preliminary to the real stuff. "The Alderman moved uneasily, for the gallery was packed with a mob ominously quiet, and that sort of thing. (*He goes to exit c.*) Coming Alderman?

ROBERTS. Not just now.

(PAYNE *exits c. to r. There is a short pause. Then he goes to door r. and knocks twice.*)

HORIGAN. (*To WAINWRIGHT*) Roberts. (HORIGAN *pantomimes for WAINWRIGHT to leave. WAINWRIGHT exits r. HORIGAN goes to door L.*) Who is it?

ROBERTS. Roberts.

(HORIGAN *opens door, ROBERTS enters and crosses r. HORIGAN closes door, and locks it. PAYNE appears at door c. of room L. just as the door closes.*)

PAYNE. I guessed as much. (*Hesitates as if not knowing what to do. As if struck by a good thought*) I will. (*Quickly goes down hall to r.*)

HORIGAN. Well, what is it?

ROBERTS. I can't do it.

HORIGAN. Can't do what?

ROBERTS. Vote for that bill.

ROBERTS. (*Goes towards* HORIGAN) Do you know what Bennett did? He came into my ward, organized a committee of voters and sent them to me at my house. They said 'If you vote against the bill you're honest. If you vote for it, you're a thief. Which are you? Then I tried to explain and they said: 'We think you're a thief, Roberts. Friday night will tell whether you are or not.'

HORIGAN. You'll have the money when that's all blown over. Then you'll find people won't ask how you got it. They'll only ask have you got it.

ROBERTS. Then they sent their wives to call on my wife while I was away. They said to her "Is your husband honest or isn't he? Our husbands want to know. If he is honest, he will vote as he did before. For your own sake find out what he's going to do!" When I returned she asked me what it meant, and I couldn't explain. I can't stand it. I'm not a thief. I'm an honest man.

HORIGAN. Of course you are. You vote for the Franchise because of your Park Hill.

ROBERTS. No I don't. I agreed to vote for it—because—well, you know why. And I can't do it.

HORIGAN. You'll *have* to do it!

ROBERTS. I can't, I tell you.

HORIGAN. I say you can and will. I sent you those notes and if——

ROBERTS. There they are—take them. (*Places notes on table*)

HORIGAN. No. They're yours.

ROBERTS. They're not. I don't want them.

HORIGAN. Neither do I. I hold you to your word.

(PAYNE *re-appears at door c. of room L. He*

pantomimes off R. as if telling someone "Yes, that's the place." Then he stands back in the hall and watches the door to the room R. The door V. of room R. suddenly opens and BENNETT enters. There is a short pause.)

BENNETT. I think I'm interested in this.

HORIGAN. What do you mean by——!

BENNETT. (To ROBERTS) Well, what are you going to do?

(ROBERTS is R. of table. HORIGAN L. of table, BENNETT back C. of table.)

ROBERTS. I—I—(*His eyes wander to the notes on desk*)

HORIGAN. See here!

BENNETT. I still think you're an honest man and if—(*Sees the notes*) What's this? (*Picks up notes and looks at them*) Notes——

HORIGAN. Put those down.

BENNETT. Are they yours?

HORIGAN. Anyway they're not yours, and if you dare read them——

BENNETT. Make up your mind right now that I'm going to read them—(*Reads notes*) So that's it. (*Goes to ROBERTS. Looks at ROBERTS, who drops his head*) What about it, Roberts? You were to get these in return for your vote, weren't you? (*Short pause*) Weren't you? (ROBERTS *nods*) I thought so.

ROBERTS. I could have kept them and have voted as I did before—and he couldn't have said a word, but I didn't. I came to give them back. I'm honest.

BENNETT. (*Kindly*) Of course you are. He attempted to bribe you and you refused. It's as clear as day. Go into the Council Room and vote as your conscience tells you. (ROBERTS *exits* R. PAYNE comes into room L. BENNETT carefully folds the

notes, puts them in his pocket and starts towards the door v. HORIGAN interposes) Well?

HORIGAN. Give—me—those notes!

BENNETT. Why should I? They're not endorsed over to you and they're not cancelled. They belong to the Sturtevant Trust Company and they'll receive them to-morrow—*after they have been photographed.*

HORIGAN. You don't leave this room till I get them.

BENNETT. Don't be a fool. I could go this way—*(Indicating door R. which leads to ante-room)* without any trouble. Instead I am going that way—*(Indicating door c.)* because I am going into that room. *(Indicating room L.)* And it's nearer. And just get this into your head. You can't bully me. I'm not afraid of you. I'm going into that room *that way and you can't stop me.*

HORIGAN. I can try.

BENNETT. You can if you wish. It's for you to say. *(Goes towards the door. He looks HORIZAN squarely in the eye. It is a test of the will of the two men and BENNETT wins. HORIZAN falters. He goes to door opens it and exits c. to L. HORIZAN gives an ejaculation of rage and discomfiture, and goes down L. BENNETT enters room L. through c. from R.)* I'm much obliged to you, Payne. *(Going c.)*

PAYNE. I was right?

BENNETT. Yes.

PAYNE. Do I get the story?

BENNETT. Certainly. You're entitled to it. I'll see you when the session is over.

PAYNE. Much obliged. *(BENNETT exits c. to R. PAYNE resumes writing. PHELAN enters L. shutting the door cautiously behind him. PAYNE sees PHELAN)* His honor has promised me the full story.

PHELAN. Then you're sure to get it.

PAYNE. It's going to be a corker.

PHELAN. That's what it is. (*Exits C. to R.*)

(*GIBBS enters room R. through door R.*)

GIBBS. I saw Roberts come in. It's all right, isn't it?

HORIGAN. We've lost. (*Up L. C.*)

GIBBS. Lost?

HORIGAN. Bennett's whipped us.

GIBBS. (*Sitting on R. chair of table. Panic stricken*) Good God! Good God!

HORIGAN. (*C. above table*) What are you squealing about? You've got only twenty-five per cent of the deal.

GIBBS. That would be bad enough but I've—I've——

HORIGAN. You've what? (*There is a pause. Goes to GIBBS. HORIGAN looks at GIBBS and the truth strikes him—takes him by collar of coat, lifts him up and looks him in the face, then drops him in chair*) You are the man who was tailing on. So you bought the stock for your own account. You were false to your partners. Damn you it serves you right. (*down GIBBS*)

GIBBS. I thought I might as well buy the stock as anyone else. It wouldn't do Wainwright any harm. It wouldn't do you any harm, and it would have made me a million instead I'm a bankrupt.

HORIGAN. Don't whine about it. Stand-up—and take your medicine like the rest of us.

GIBBS. Is there no way we can get Bennett to keep his hands off? I'd do anything.

HORIGAN. Anything?

GIBBS. Yes, anything!

HORIGAN. (*Goes to GIBBS*) Then there's one more chance. I've always known one of three things to get a man—money, ambition or a woman.

Bennett's price isn't money and it isn't ambition, perhaps it is a woman.

GIBBS. (*Rising and going to front of table to*) A woman?

HORIGAN. Yes, and you know which one. He's in love with the girl you're engaged to! Understand?

GIBBS. No.

HORIGAN. Tell him you'll break the engagement if he'll let the bill go through. It's our only chance.

GIBBS. He wouldn't do it.

HORIGAN. It could do no harm to try, and if he refused and said anything about it, it would be your word against his.

GIBBS. I *could* deny it, couldn't I?

HORIGAN. Certainly. (*Unlocking door leading to room L. Going back of table*) He's in there; ask him in here, and try it.

GIBBS. He wouldn't. (*Going in front of table*)

HORIGAN. It's the only thing that stands between you and ruin. It means a lot to me too—you'll do it?

GIBBS. Yes.

HORIGAN. Good. (*Exits c.*)

GIBBS. I was told his honor was here.

PAYNE. He was, but he's left—want to *see* him?

GIBBS. I've *got* to see him. Know where he's gone?

PAYNE. No.

GIBBS. Thanks. (*Exits up c.*)

PAYNE. Much obliged. (*Exits*)

(PERRY and DALLAS enter room R.)

PERRY. What an awful crowd there is in there? (*Crosses to L. of table*)

DALLAS. Dreadful. It was suffocating. (*Sits in chair R. of table*)

(PHELAN *appears at door R., comes on closing door after him.*)

PHELAN. You're the man *I* want to see. (*To the R. of PERRY*)

PERRY. What about? (L.)

PHELAN. (C.) That lie they're telling in there—about his honor selling Borough Stock through you—

PERRY. You'd better ask *him*.

PHELAN. I have.

PERRY. Does he deny it?

PHELAN. No. He don't deny it and he won't explain.

PERRY. Then there you are. (*Drops down L.*)

DALLAS. (R.) He *did* it, Mr. Phelan. He admitted it to me.

PHELAN. But *why* did he do it? (C.)

DALLAS. For the profit of course.

PHELAN. Profit? If it was money he wanted he could have had a million just for keeping his hands off. What's the profit he could make through him compared to that?

DALLAS. I—I never thought of it in that light—Perry!

PHELAN. (*To PERRY*) You can clear this up and you've got to do it. Do you hear—you've got to—

PERRY. (L.) Got to! Don't take that tone with me Mr. Phelan.

PHELAN. I was wrong boy—but you don't seem to understand what this means. They're sayin' in there that's Bennett's a fraud and worse. That he used his office to make money for himself and I know it's a lie. You know it too, and you must tell—you must—to save him.

PERRY. But I promised.

DALLAS. *What* did you promise?

PERRY. I can't tell you.

PHELAN. You've *got* to tell. If this story isn't

contradicted Bennett's ruined, his career is ended, his reputation gone and he's down and out forever. It's up to you for I know you can save him if you'll tell the truth.

DALLAS. If you *can*, Perry, do! do!

PERRY. *Does* it mean—all that?

PHELAN. Yes. And now tell me, boy—he didn't sell the stock to make money for himself, did he?

PERRY. Of course not and anybody who thought he did must have had weed in his roof garden.

PHELAN. I knew it. (*Crosses back of desk R.*)

DALLAS. (*Crosses to PERRY L.*) Then—if he didn't do it for himself for whom did he do it?

PERRY. For you and me—principally for you.

DALLAS. For me? (*L. C.*)

PERRY. Yes. The day after he vetoed the bill he publicly stated he would fight it to the end and advised all the stockholders to sell out didn't he?

DALLAS. Yes.

PHELAN. But Wainwright told 'em not to——

PERRY. Exactly. Well it was Alwyn against Uncle and I was with Alwyn. Uncle refused to surrender the actual stock he held for Dallas and me. So on Alwyn's advice I sold the exact amount of our holdings to protect us. Alwyn loaned me the money; that's all he had to do with it.

DALLAS. Then he couldn't possibly profit by it.

PERRY. Of course not.

PHELAN. Young man—come with me. (*R.*)

PERRY. Where——

PHELAN. In there—to tell 'em the truth.

PERRY. You bet I will. (*Goes to door*) Wait here, Dallas, I won't be long. (*PHELAN and PERRY exeunt*)

DALLAS. (*Alone*) He did it for me. And I accused him—oh, the terrible things I said—(*Sits L.*)

(*BENNETT and GIBBS enter room L.*)

GIBBS. Hello, Bennett. I've been looking for you. (R. of desk)

BENNETT *ignores GIBBS.*)

BENNETT. Well.

GIBBS. I want to see you.

BENNETT. I've no time to spare.

GIBBS. This is important.

BENNETT. Well. (*Comes down c.*)

GIBBS. (*Indicating room R.*) Come in here.

BENNETT. (*Going front of table*) No. If you've anything to say to me—say it.

(*GIBBS hesitates not knowing just how to begin.*
DALLAS sits.)

GIBBS. You've won the fight, and yet you've *lost*, haven't you?

(*DALLAS hears the voices and remains silent.*)

BENNETT. What? (L. c.)

GIBBS. (R. c.) What *I've won*—*Dallas!* I've *won*—what *you want*. You've *won* what *I want*. Can't we trade?

(*DALLAS rises and stands listening.*)

BENNETT. You'll have to speak plainer.

GIBBS. Dallas was tricked into marrying me. She doesn't care a straw for me. *She loves you and you love her.* Don't you?

BENNETT. Well?

GIBBS. Just the same, she agreed to marry *me*. And as long as I hold her to it, she'll keep her promise. You want me to speak plainly and I'll do it. A word from you and the Borough Franchise Bill, will pass. Say it and I'll break the engagement

and leave Dallas free to marry you. If you *don't* say it *I'll* marry her!

BENNETT. No.

GIBBS. Wait. You don't realize what it means. The defeat of the bill won't make you any money—it won't help you politically—it won't do you any good in the world—it's just what you call "a matter of principle." On the other hand, there's Dallas, the girl you love and who loves you. It's not only your happiness, it's hers, to. That's the way it stands—on the one hand your "principle" on the other, her happiness and yours! Which is it to be?

BENNETT. What a dog you are, Gibbs! What a low, miserable, cowardly cur you are! I thought I understood you pretty well, I thought I knew how mean and despicable you could be. But I was mistaken. I didn't know half of it.

GIBBS. Then—you refuse?

BENNETT. Yes, I refuse.

GIBBS. You're a fool. (*Goes down R.*)

BENNETT. And now, listen. When you see me—get out of my way. Don't come near me, don't speak to me, for if ever you do I'll serve you worse than I did before. So, remember. (*Exits c. to R. There is a slight pause*)

PERRY. (*Enters R.*) I soon made everything plain to them. They understand and nobody blames him.

(*GIBBS enters room R.*)

GIBBS. Why, Dallas I——!

DALLAS. Mr. Bennett called you a low, miserable, cowardly cur—I endorse the sentiment to the last letter.

PERRY. I don't know what it's all about but that goes with me too.

GIBBS. You don't mean to say that——

DALLAS. I mean to say that I heard your proposition and Mr. Bennett's reply.

GIBBS. Surely you don't take that seriously, if you do——

DALLAS. I was tricked once. I can't be tricked again.

GIBBS. But Dallas I——

DALLAS. And to think I promised to marry such a man as you—that you've had your arm about me—that I've felt your kiss on my cheek—You! You! Oh, the degradation! I shall never forget it. I thank God that I came here to-night—that I found you out before it was too late. And now—go!

GIBBS. But if you'll only let me——

DALLAS. That is all, Mr. Gibbs. (*GIBBS exits c.*) They lied to me! They lied to me! (*Going L.*)

PERRY. Who?

DALLAS. Uncle and Mr. Gibbs.

PERRY. Well, I don't know what they said, but I am willing to take half the bet.

DALLAS. And Alwyn—what will he think of me? What *can* he think of me? (*Cries and sinks into chair L. of table*)

PERRY. That's right, have a good *cry*. Don't be a piker, have a *good* one! (*There is a pause. Softly*) Don't forget he has often told me he loves you.

DALLAS. He has, hasn't he?

PERRY. (*Back to comedy*) That's what! Unless my ears got the wires crossed.

DALLAS. (*Rising*) I must see him, to-night.

PERRY. To-night?

DALLAS. (*Goes down L.—PERRY joins her*) I have misunderstood and wronged him. I must tell him so.

(*PHELAN and PAYNE enter room L. at door c. from L.*)

PHELAN. All you have to do is to hunt up his

honor, say that everything's O. K. and that I'm waitin' for him here.

PAYNE. I'm to get the full story remember. His honor said so.

PHELAN. Oh, you'll get it all right.

(PAYNE *exits c. to R.* PHELAN *goes down c. back of table.*)

DALLAS. I'm going to Mr. Phelan—

PERRY. But see here—

DALLAS. I am—(DALLAS *enters room L.* PERRY *follows.* PHELAN *sees them and looks surprised.* To PHELAN) I must see Mr. Bennett. Will you tell him please?

PHELAN. This is his busy evening.

DALLAS. I have something—urgent—to say to him, and I want to say it to-night.

PHELAN. He has a very important engagement coming off in a few minutes.

PERRY. (*Going to corner of table*) This is important too.

DALLAS. Very important.

(PHELAN *looks DALLAS in the face. She drops her eyes and he understands.*)

PHELAN. Sure you shall see him. Could you wait a little while.

DALLAS. Certainly.

PHELAN. Then if you'll just step this way I'll fix it for you. (PHELAN *opens door L.*)

DALLAS. (*Going to door L.*) There'll be no mistake.

PHELAN. I should say not. No matter who's in there, it's all right.

DALLAS. Thank you. (*Exeunt L.*)

PERRY. Well, you see, Alderman—

PHELAN. Of course I see—get out.

PERRY. Since you ask me so politely I will.
(*Exeunt L.*)

PHELAN. (*Alone*) Mistake? Hardly.

(BENNETT *enters c. from R. and goes to PHELAN.*)

BENNETT. It's all right.

PHELAN. In there! (*Indicates door R.*)

BENNETT. No trouble was there?

PHELAN. None. Say, but I'm going to enjoy this?

BENNETT. They'll be here in a minute. I pressed Payne into service again and sent word by him I wanted to see them here.

PHELAN. That fellow Payne's all right. Fine little messenger boy too.

(HORIGAN *and* WAINWRIGHT *enter room R.*)

WAINWRIGHT. What can he want?

HORIGAN. To let us know his terms I suppose.

WAINWRIGHT. Shall we go in?

HORIGAN. There's nothing to gain by waiting.

(HORIGAN *and* WAINWRIGHT *enter room L.*)

PHELAN. Ha!

HORIGAN. I understand you want to see us——

BENNETT. I do.

HORIGAN. You've got us beat—we admit it—so, name your price.

WAINWRIGHT. Yes. What do you want?

BENNETT. I have no price.

HORIGAN. You must want something—what is it?

BENNETT. Nothing.

WAINWRIGHT. Then why did you send for us?

BENNETT. To tell you that to-morrow you'll both

be indicted for bribery—to let you know that every step you take is watched.

WAINWRIGHT. You can't prove anything against me.

HORIGAN. You talk like a fool. If you do indict me—what of it? I control the District Attorney and some of the Judges! As for this Roberts' matter—I'm not worrying about that. A smart lawyer can explain it in a thousand ways. (*Goes up R.*)

WAINWRIGHT. In any case you can't connect me with it. (*To BENNETT*)

BENNETT. I think I can. Still I have this satisfaction—if I fail, I can connect you with half a dozen or so of similar enterprises.

WAINWRIGHT. Guess work and generalities are not proof, Mr. Bennett.

BENNETT. For instance, what about the two hundred thousand dollars in cash and the twenty-five thousand shares of stock at 63 which you were to give Mr. Horigan for the Borough Franchise. (*WAINWRIGHT and HORIGAN are amazed*) Pretty good guess, wasn't it?

WAINWRIGHT. That kind of evidence won't go in court. The court will want proof and you have none.

BENNETT. Haven't I? (*Opens door L. THOMPSON enters L.*)

WAINWRIGHT (*Astounded*) Thompson?

BENNETT. No—not Thompson! Garrison!

THOMPSON. Yes, Garrison! (*Goes to WAINWRIGHT*) The son of the man you betrayed—the son of the woman who died because of it. That's who I am—Henry Garrison!

(*The situation dawns on WAINWRIGHT. He is overcome by the meaning and the horror of it. He gasps and seems about to collapse.*)

BENNETT. (*To WAINWRIGHT*) Now you understand?

WAINWRIGHT. (*To THOMPSON*) You have betrayed me? (*Sits*)

THOMPSON. Betrayed you! What have I been waiting for—and watching and working for—but to betray you. When they telegraphed me to come home what did I find—my mother—dead—my father, disgraced, and with a bullet hole—My little sister dependent on friends—(*THOMPSON puts his finger to his temple*) And you did it.

WAINWRIGHT. No!

THOMPSON. You did it. They wouldn't tell me who it was but I put things together and I soon understood. Then I said I'll pay him back—no matter how long it takes, I'll pay him back! (*WAINWRIGHT trembles and draws in his under lip*) I schemed and planned and plotted, and the day I went to work for you I know my turn was sure to come if I could only wait patiently and work cautiously. So I schooled myself to be deferential, to fetch for you and carry for you, to say "thank you, sir" and "I hope you are pleased, sir" while all the time I was aching to put my fingers to your throat. (*WAINWRIGHT instinctively puts his hands to his throat as if to protect himself*) After a while you began to tempt me and try me but I understood and refused to be caught. So day by day, I worked myself into your confidence until at last you trusted me—you trusted *me*! The rest was easy!

HORIGAN. You were listening when *I* was there.

THOMPSON. I was always listening. (*To WAINWRIGHT*) I made copies of the confidential despatches you sent. I took down your private interviews in shorthand! Every day I made a duplicate of the note book into which I took your letters as you dictated them and I left you the *copy* while I kept the original. I kept track of the checks by which you completed your transactions and—when the time came I procured them—I secured the proofs, the absolute proofs and I've turned them

over to him. (*Indicating BENNETT*) And you'll go to jail—you'll go to jail—and when you come out I'll kill you. Do you hear, I'll kill you.

WAINWRIGHT. No! No!

BENNETT. (*Goes to THOMPSON*) Steady boy.

THOMPSON. I will! I will I tell you! I'll kill you! Oh, if I could wait nine years for this, don't you think I can wait for that! (*WAINWRIGHT looks about apprehensively and appealingly, THOMPSON begins to break down and become hysterical*) Nine years—Nine years of humbling myself. Of watching—and waiting—and praying—for this day to come and it's here—It's here—at last—it's here.

(*Down L. THOMPSON sobs hysterically. BENNETT pantomimes for PHELAN to take him away.*)

PHELAN. Come lad! (*Puts his arm about THOMPSON—and takes him towards exit L.*)

THOMPSON. Don't forget when you come out I shall be waiting—(*Going*) after nine years—nine years!

(*THOMPSON exeunts L. There is a pause. WAINWRIGHT in seat R. of table. WILLIAMS enters from room R. WAINWRIGHT drops into chair R. of table.*)

(*Police effect off.*)

HORIGAN. The police have come.

(*WILLIAMS enters room L.*)

BENNETT. Police? What police? (*Rises c.*)

HORIGAN. The police I sent for. I'll call 'em in.

BENNETT. No. No, I say. Phelan tell the man in command of the police that you come from the

Mayor and he's to take orders from no one but me.

PHELAN. Sure. (*Goes towards exit*)

WAINWRIGHT. There's no need. I withdraw the bill.

(*PHELAN stops and comes down. WILLIAMS looks at HORIGAN. BENNETT sits in chair c. back of desk.*)

HORIGAN. Don't you understand. He withdraws the bill, see to it.

(*WILLIAMS exits R. Drops down R.*)

PHELAN. (*To HORIGAN*) Horigan, I told you I should drop something on you! I've done it too.

HORIGAN. You?

PHELAN. Me! I found Thompson. I saw him with Wainwright, knew I'd seen him before, thought it over, remembered, and then went after him. I've dropped it on you all right, and I don't think I'll have to walk round you either.

HORIGAN. (*To BENNETT*) About that report of the library and the aqueduct—don't forget *that*. (*Up-stage*)

BENNETT. It will be published in the morning.

HORIGAN. No! It wouldn't be good politics. I'm going to hold it over.

BENNETT. Oh, no, you're not. I have already sent it to the press with the information that I shall return to the city every dollar due under the contracts.

HORIGAN. Bennett, you're either the biggest fool, or the best politician in the country.

WAINWRIGHT. (*Rising*) There's no use—my asking for mercy?

HORIGAN. What's *the matter* with you, Wainwright? Brace up and come along. So long as you have money—don't worry! The woods are full of

investigations, and subpoenas, and indictments, but I notice there are damn few rich men in jail even to-day. (HORIGAN and WAINWRIGHT *exeunt* C. to R.)

BENNETT. He's a rogue, but he has nerve. (*Rises and moves around R. to front of desk*)

PHELAN. Yes, he's a game bird but he flies funny! Don't forget your other engagement.

BENNETT. What engagement?

(PHELAN *opens door* L. DALLAS *enters* L. and *goes towards* BENNETT. PHELAN *exits* L.)

BENNETT. Dallas.

DALLAS. Forgive me, Alwyn, I shall *never* forgive myself.

BENNETT. For what?

DALLAS. For what I thought of you—for what I said.

BENNETT. You didn't understand.

DALLAS. No. But I should have believed in you.

BENNETT. Do you believe in me now?

DALLAS. I believe in you—and I love you.

BENNETT. Dallas.

DALLAS. I love you dear—I love you.

BENNETT. But—Gibbs.

DALLAS. There's no one but you—there never *was* anyone but you.

BENNETT. Dallas!

CURTAIN.

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